

SIXTY ONE  
SERMONS

*Dee* Preached mostly upon *Dee*

PUBLIC  
OCCASIONS;

Whereof Five formerly Printed.

By ADAM LITTLETON, D.D.

Rector of *Chelfsey* in *Middlesex*, and  
One of his MAJESTIES Chaplains in Ordinary.

With a TABLE.

*By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report.*  
2 Cor. VI. 8.

*For we have this treasure in Earthen vessels, that the  
Excellency of the power may be of God, and not of  
Us.* 2 Cor. IV. 7.

L O N D O N,

Printed by S. Roycroft for Richard Marriott.  
MDC LXXX.



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SERMONS

OCCASIONS

BY ADAM LITTLETON, D.D.

WITH A TABLE

LONDON

Printed by J. G. Smith for R. B. Martin  
MDCCXX



TO THE  
RIGHT HONOURABLE,  
THE  
RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,  
And Others my Worthy Auditors,  
INHABITANTS  
OF THE  
Parish of Chelsey.

Right Honourable, &c.



*T* having been grown as fashionable a Custom to bespeak Sureties and Undertakers for Books, when they are exposed to the Publick, as it is for Children, when they are first presented in the Church; and this Ceremony being much more necessary, when such Books, like those Children, give  
a up

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up their Names to Christ, and are devoted to Sacred purposes: I was not long to debate with myself, whose Patronage I should implore for this mean Production, or to whose favour I should Commend and Dedicate the Labours of my Ministry, which I have exercised amongst You. For though several of these Pieces were Originally designed and calculated for other Places and Occasions, of which possibly some few may seem so Appropriate, that they cannot well be thought in any sense to belong elsewhere; yet the Rudiments and Grounds even of such forreign Discourses generally have been proposed and laid down Here first, and afterwards filled up and fitted for those other Places and Occasions: so that upon this very account this Volume of Sermons devolves upon You as a natural Right, it being a Home-born, and, as I may say, a Child of the Parish; and begs that Acceptance at your hands, now it is Printed and Published, as it found at first in its private and more imperfect Delivery.

Besides, as I never did primarily, and of my self, intend any such Publication, which I am able to make good by several Arguments and Instances; so I cannot but acknowledge, that to those other Motives, which induced me to this hazardous Adventure, this Consideration added no small weight, that whereas by a former Undertaking of another nature I had been necessitated into some seeming neglects, as to my own personal Attendance, this Attempt of mine, I doubted not, would pass for some kind of ingenuous Compensation, and the Press would make part of amends for the defects of the Pulpit.

And further, when I found my self concluded under an Ingagement of being thus made Publick, I could not but reflect upon those many Obligations, You have laid  
upon



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upon me, by your Countenance to my unworthy Person, your Incouragement and Approbation of my poor Labours, and your candid Excuse and Acceptance of my weak Performances in the exercise of my Ministry, ever since I was placed amongst You. All which did easily prevail with me in my Circumstances, to resolve it my Duty, to do something, wherein I might testifie to the World my Thankfulness, and consequently, having at present nothing better at hand, to design this Work, such as it is, and to erect it for a Monument and Pillar of my Gratitude.

I must confess, when I looked upon the worthlesness of the Work and the meanness of the Author, and compared It with other things of this kind, which have deservedly got a high Esteem in the World, and My self with those great Names, which beside the other Advantages of Learning, Piety, Reputation, &c. look big and fair in English story, upon this single account of Preachers; I found my self much disheartened, my thoughts cooled, and my resolutions even chilled, as to the whole affair: considering, what a load of Censure I was likely to bring upon my self. However, when I resumed the Debate, I did, and justly too, conceive, that Your Acceptance alone would in some measure shield me from common Censure, and did determin with my self, that that Inconvenience ought to be so far from discouraging such Undertakings, that it is no less then morally Impossible for any one to deserve well of the Publick without running that Hazard. Again, as God bestowes divers Gifts, so they are all designed to Edifie with all. Eph. 4. 12. It is not for every one to be so Learned as Andrews, or so Seraphick as Donne, or so Judicious as Sanderson, or so Powerful as Farington; (not to mention some living, Men  
of

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of Renown) but Every one may be Useful in his way, and must do good with the Talent which he has.

Exod. 35. 25.

We read, that some Women, whose heart stirred them up in Wisdom, spun Goats-hair, for the Work of the Tabernacle, for the service of the Sanctuary; and were no doubt as well accepted, as those Women, who in the Verse next before are said to have spun Blue and Purple and Scarlet and Fine linnen, for the same pious use.

One thing there is amongst others, which will be no Disadvantage to this Work, though never so mean in It self, in its Author; to wit, the Variety of Occasions, of Subjects, of Methods, and peradventure of Style and Expression also: insomuch, that in this respect every ordinary Reader may meet with something or other here, whereby he may be Edified, wherewith he may be satisfied.

Upon this Mention I must crave leave to give some Account of the Work and My self, and by that means inlarge this Epistle into a Preface, that so Others, if any others shall cast their eye upon it, and think it worth their perusal, may owe their Satisfaction (if it shall so prove) to You, for whose sake it was principally intended.

In the Festival Discourses I have endeavoured, by laying down suitable grounds of Meditation, to reduce our Practice to the Standard of Primitive Devotion. For it is evident enough in Story, that these Solemnities of the Church had that Respect and Observance amongst the Ancients, as appears by many Pieces of that kind, which are still Extant in Greek and Latin, (not to mention other Languages.) especially those of Saint Austin, besides several others of the Fathers and Ecclesiastical Writers, both before and since  
his

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*his time ; who have by their Sermons and Homilies cultivated this part of Piety , to the great Benefit of succeeding Ages , if we would make Use of their pious Labours , and Imitate them therein ; and no less to the Shame of Ours , that we do not do so. For alas ! to that deplorable condition is Religion now grown , that in these Instances of Piety common Devotion is grown very cold , and there is scarce any Multitude that keeps Holyday. So thrifty are People grown of their Time , so mindful of their other Employments , or at least so regardless of Gods Service , that the Lords day is thought enough to spend in this Exercise ; and then too , 'tis not that we meet in our publick Assemblies , as we should do , to joyn in Prayers and Praises to God , to acknowledge and implore his Mercies , and to commemorate the Instances of our Redemption , and the Examples of his Saints ; but only to be entertained with popular Harangues , and take up our Hour in bearing , that we may afterward censure the Speaker ; which is a main point of Edification , when a Christian thinks himself able to Judge that , by which he ought in duty to Improve himself. It is a sad Consideration , that , whereas amongst the Turks their Mosks or places of Worship are daily , hourly , frequented , even by the Vulgar sort , out of a mistaken Veneration to a False Prophet ; our Churches may stand open , not only on ordinary Week-days , but also on our Solemnities , and yet scarce get company enough to make up a Congregation. Surely it is not the fear of Superstition , that makes people thus shie ; but somewhat else , I am apt to think , the Curiosity and Wantonness , or rather the Licentiousness and Profaneness of the times , we live in. Wherefore I thought fit , not to inlarge this Set of Discourses , fearing that these few Essayes might prove*

*Psal. 42. 4.*



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tiresome enough to some Readers: though I have, for their sakes, in most of them couched much of common Matter, of Business that belongs to all whatever Christians; which is the next thing I am to answer for.

In the Common Subjects I have made choice of such Arguments, as might be useful to Community; such, I mean, as are of the most general Concern, to press home the sense of God's Love in his Son, and the conviction of Duty on our side; and to that end, I have treated of such Principles, and in such Methods, as may best salve the Phenomena, the Appearances and Designs of the Gospel, and be most applicable to Practice, and make the kindest Impressions upon mens Minds. I cannot but foresee, what Objections, by my so doing, I have laid my self open to. The Main, into which this misapprehension can resolve it self, is this; that I do (at least seem so to do, to) recede from the sense of the English Church in her Articles of Religion, which, as some think, have an Inclination of favour to Mr. Calvin's sense.

I say then, that, as to the Church of England, I have that Duty and Obedience for Her, as I am her unworthy Son and sworn Servant, and were I a Stranger should have that Satisfaction in her Doctrine, Worship, Government, and other her Constitutions, that I do heartily submit to her Authority, and acquiesce in her Judgment. And if I have in any thing unwittingly deviated from her Sense, I shall be as ready to acknowledge an Error: *Nollem dictum*. But in this matter her Homilies, which are the Explication of her Doctrine, and her Offices, which are the Application of it, and consequently are both the best Interpreters of her Mind, will, I am assured, abundantly justify me against any such untoward Misprision.

Nor

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Nor do I, in the next place, believe, what is by some suggested, that the English Church had any such particular Inclination to John Calvin, more then to Martin Luther, in that Reformation, which She made; but only had respect to plain Truth and her own Convenience: a manifest Proof whereof this one Instance will afford, that when He did himself interpose in King Edward the Sixt's time, and would fain have been concerned in our Affair, on purpose, as may be imagined, that he might have opportunity of commending to the English, as he had done to some other Churches, his New Discipline, (an Invention never heard of in the world before him, and of which Judicious Hooker gives no less charitable then true an Account in his Preface to the best Ecclesiastical Polity, that was ever written) he, I mean Mr. Calvin, was excused, that is, was modestly refused from intermeddling. The Church of England then is to be thought no more Calvinistical, then it is Lutheran, or any thing else, in her Principles and Methods, having stood intirely upon her own Bottom, used her own Authority, and taken her own Measures, in the glorious work of Reformation, wherein She hath acquitted herself to the Envy of all out of her Communion, and the great Satisfaction of all that are in it.

Further, as to that excellent Person, whom I take to have been a pious Man, and otherwise a learned Interpreter; I do not conceive, that his Sentiments are in all points so properly suited to Edification, I mean to the Instruction and Comfort of common Hearers in publick Assemblies; a thing, which Himself, upon a modest Reflection, gives Caution of at the close of his Doctrine of Decrees. And it is apparent to me, from his whole Book of Institutions, which was his  
Master.

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2 Pet. 3. 16.

*Master-piece and the Ground-work of all his Commentaries upon Scripture, that he had prepared his Scheme and Train of thoughts before hand, and then applied such places of Scripture, as he met with, that seemed to look favourably that way, for its Confirmation. Amongst the rest, St. Paul's Authority is made great use of, in those passages of his, which I cannot but believe to be those things hard to be understood, which S. Peter remarks in his brother Paul's Epistles: whereas it is but a just and equitable Demand, that Obscure and Difficult places should be interpreted according to the sense and meaning of those that are of Plain-er expression, and of a more Universal importance.*

*Indeed, the main Stress of this debate lies in this; that, whereas he makes the divine Decree, by which the eternal state of Men is determined, to be Antecedent to the Covenant made with God in Christ; it is certainly more proper and agreeable to the tenour of the Gospel, that the Decree was Consequent to the Covenant, and founded upon it. To enlarge this Hint, and make it more plain. God, says he, did at first, from all Eternity, upon the foresight or predetermination, (which ever it was) of the Sin and Fall of man) resolve with himself, out of an especial grace, to single out some few out of the common mass of Mankind, and to ordain them unto life and salvation; and then, for the sake only of those few, to send his Son Christ, the Mediator of the new Covenant, with a Commission to work out the Redemption of those few, the Elect; passing by all the rest of the world, and leaving them to perish. From this followed several other Positions, as Corollaries and necessary Inferences, which do altogether constitute and make up the body of that Doctrine. Now this, besides that it speaks a language*



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language uncouth and strange to holy Scripture, in all its plainest and most direct declarations of God's design and dealing with the children of men; it seems to reflect upon the Justice as well as other Attributes of God, who himself disavows all partiality in his proceedings, telling us that he is no respecter of persons; and withal, as-<sup>1 Pet. i. 17.</sup> much to disparage and eclipse the glories of our Saviour's al sufficient Merit, by restraining the influence of that common Salvation, which he hath wrought for us,<sup>Jude 3.</sup> and by making his Person and his Undertaking to truckle under the limitation of a foregoing Decree. On the contrary, to say, that God, upon the foresight of the Fall, did by an everlasting Covenant engage his Son to satisfy for the sins of men, and to purchase for them life; and then, according to the terms of that Covenant, (the conditions whereof on our side are Repentance, Faith, and new Obedience) did decree to save all true Believers, those that should perform those conditions, and to condemn all others for their Unbelief, Impenitence, and Disobedience: this speaks the true sense of the Gospel, the glad tidings of Salvation; this acquits God's Mercy, his Justice, and his Truth; this gives the Son of God the glory of his Merit and his Grace, and at once presses home the Obligations of Duty upon the Sons of men.

I shall not now wade farther in this Argument; as knowing, 'tis a business capable of eternal Dispute, and that there may be possibly unanswerable Objections on either side. Indeed, such are the Works of common Nature, that God's Methods are unsearchable, and his<sup>Rom. 11. 33.</sup> ways past finding out; much more must we allow this in the Mysteries of his Grace, in things of supernatural concern. And yet here as it is necessary for us to admire divine Wisdom, (such is the depth of his Counsels) so is it most safe for us to apply our selves to

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Deut. 29. 29.

*our known Duty, and to say with Moses, that Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things, which are Revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of his Law.*

*One thing more will be most certainly, because I understand it hath been objected to me; wherein the Right Reverend Bishop Sanderson, in his Preface to his Sermons, hath made my Defence unnecessary; that I have up and down, as Occasion directed me, and Duty obliged me, pleaded the Churches cause against Schism, wherein all that dissent from our Establishments may be forward enough to think themselves concerned. But, I thank God, however They may censure me, my own Conscience doth not accuse me; nor have I said any thing out of Ill will to any Person or Party of Men, but have, I hope, handled such arguments, when they came in my way, with that Moderation of Spirit and Modesty of expression, as may not justly offend any man, who is alike Moderate and Modest, and is able to distinguish betwixt what is designed to Persuade and Convince, and what is intended for Satyr and Invektive. If the love of Truth and Peace, and that Duty which I owe to the Best of Churches, hath any where transported me; the grounds of so just a Zeal will, I hope, in some measure justify it, or at least make it capable of pardon, from all persons of Ingenuity or Christianity, from all that deserve the name of English men or Protestants. Truth is; never was there such a Juncture of affairs, such a pressing Instance of danger from our common Enemies, the Papists, as now, to prevail with us all to unite in one common Interest, of securing our Government and Religion against all wicked Plots and Attempts, which, unless  
God*

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God be the more merciful to us, our own Divisions are the most likely Means to render successful, and to bring their dismal Effects upon us. For there's no one can pretend to that Ignorance, as not to be very sensible, that the Romish Party, as they have made great Advantage of those our Divisions, so have been the chiefest Fomenters of them, shifting themselves into the shape of all sorts of Sects among us, on purpose that they might infuse Principles of irreconcilable dislike and animosity against the Church, out of whose bosom they made their departure; that Church, which is the best Bulwark against Popery in the world, and which, if deserted by her Friends and Members, must needs become a Prey to her Adversaries. God be thanked, that English Interest is wrapt up in the safety of our Religion; and it must be granted by All, that, as our Enemies method of contriving our destruction has been by Dividing us, so we have no other way left of securing our selves but by Reuniting. May God of his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, as he hath hitherto miraculously done, still preserve Us.

To return to You at last, Right Honourable, &c. whose Candour I have all along experienced to be such, that whatsoever has been set down here by way of Apology or Vindication, hath as to You been altogether needless and impertinent: It hath been for other Readers sakes, that I have thus trespassed upon your patience; which Transgression of mine, together with the Imperfections of these my sorry Labours and my own many Infirmities, I humbly beseech you to forgive, and to accept of this, whatever it is, mean Pledge of his grateful Acknowledgments, who is

Chelsey, Oct. 10.

1679.

Your most unworthy Servant  
and Minister in the Gospel,

ADAM LITTLETON.



# A TABLE of the *Texts*; with the **TITLES** of the following *Sermons*.

N. B. A Lent Ser.<sup>n</sup> Before y<sup>e</sup> K<sup>ing</sup> Mar. 25. 1674.

at Whitehall. XXI. Sermons upon the Festivals and Anniversaries.

Page 1<sup>st</sup> — Upon the Annunciation. S. Luke I. 28. --- And the Angel came in unto Her.

R. 24 at Chelsea — Upon the Nativity. 1 Tim. III. 16. And without controversie, Great is the mystery of Godlines: God was manifest in the Flesh. ---

Page 35 — The Temple — Dec. 25. 1667 — S. John I. 14. And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of Grace and Truth.

Clarendon House, before y<sup>e</sup> Dukes of Orm — Isa. IX. 6. Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. ---

1671 — 45 — S. Luke II. 14. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace; Good will towards Men.

St. Mart. in y<sup>e</sup> Field — Upon the Passion. S. Job. XIX. 5. Behold the Man. — P. 53

on Good-Fry — 68 — Upon the Resurrection. S. Luke XXIV. 34. The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. — 63

Chelvy — Easter Day — 1669 — Upon the Mission of the Holy Ghost. S. John XV. 26. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father; even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me. — Page 76.

— D<sup>o</sup> On Whit-Sunday — 1670. — Upon the Holy and blessed Trinitie. 1 John V. 7. For there are Three that bear record in Heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One.

At Westm<sup>r</sup> Abby. — Upon S. Michael's Day. S. Matth. XVIII. 10. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in Heaven their Angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven.

Trin: Sun<sup>y</sup> May 26. 1678 — 109 — Upon S. John Baptist's Day. S. Matth. III. 2. --- Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. — 133

Ibid A. D. 1674 — Upon S. Matthew's Day. S. Matth. IX. 9. And as Jesus passed

Page 119 —

At Whitehall —

for y<sup>e</sup> Ham<sup>y</sup> —

June 24. 1667 —

At Westm<sup>r</sup> Abby — Sep<sup>r</sup> 21. 1675 —

forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custome: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. — Page 143

Upon S. Mark's Day. Acts XV. 37, 38, 39. And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought not good to take him with them, &c. Chelvy — Apr. 25. 1675. P. 153.

Upon S. Luke's Day. Col. IV. 14. Luke the Beloved Physician and Demas greet you. — at y<sup>e</sup> Abby — 1674 — 163

Upon S. Philip and S. Jacob's Day. S. John I. 46. --- Come and see. — 1677 —

Upon S. Stephen's Day. Acts VII. 60. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. — 1675 —

Upon the Holy Innocents Day. S. Matthew II. 13. to 19. And when they were departed, behold, the Angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise and take the young child, and his mother, and flee into Egypt, &c. — 1676 —

Upon S. Andrews Day. S. Matth. IV. 18, 19, 20. And Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon call'd Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the Sea; (for they were fishers:) And he saith unto them, Follow me, &c. — 1678 —

Upon Gunpowder Treason. Rom. XIII. 1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher Powers. — 1675 — 217

Upon the Martyrdom of King Charles the First. S. John XIX. 15. Shall I crucifie your King? — 1677 —

Upon the Birth and Return of King Charles the Second. Prov. XXIV. 21. My Son, fear thou the Lord and the King; and meddle not with them, that are given to change. — Before y<sup>e</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Thos. Davis — 1<sup>st</sup> May VIII.

Nov: 30. —

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\* Xr. Ch. Southwark Dec<sup>r</sup> 17-1671 + S<sup>r</sup> Tr. Warrington Aug. 1-1675.  
 \* Dr<sup>gno</sup> Fell, B<sup>o</sup> of Oxon, & Dr<sup>o</sup> of Xr Ch. + Tho<sup>o</sup> Walcott Esq. Landray. Sur. Feb. 17  
 Chelisy Chapell. Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> 1676 \* A.D. 1678.

## A TABLE of the TEXTS.

### VIII. Sermons upon Solemn

on Easter Wed<sup>d</sup> Occasions. 1674.

Page **A** T S. Maries Hospital. S. Luke XIX. 8. And Zacheus stood and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.

At the Consecration of a Church. Eph. II. 21, 22. In whom all the building fishy framed together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord: In whom also you are build- ed together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. P. 274.

\* At the Consecration of a Bishop. 1 Tim. III. 1. This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work. 287.

+ At a Reading in the Middle Tem- ple. S. Matth. V. 17. Think not, that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 299.

+ At a Reading in the Inner Tem- ple. S. Luke VII. 33, 34, 35. For John the Baptist came neither eat- ing bread, nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. The son of man is come eating and drink- ing; and ye say, Behold, Ec. 319.

Oct<sup>r</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> At a Meeting of the Clergy at Acton. 1 John V. 8. And there are Three that bear witness in Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood; and these three a- gree in one. P. 324.

Nov<sup>r</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Upon the Discovery of the late Popish Plot. Psal. XXXVI. 5, 6. Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the hea- vens, and thy faithfulness reach- eth unto the clouds. Thy righte- ousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep. 335.

Feb<sup>r</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> Upon the Fast-day, April 11. S. Matth. VIII. 25. Lord, save us; we perish. Page 344.

### XXI. Sermons upon Com- mon Subjects.

**O**F Gods Love in giving his Son. S. John III. 16. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. — Part 3.

Of the Divine Will for Mens Salvation.. 1 Tim. II. 4. Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. — Page 10<sup>th</sup> Guildhall.

Of the Conversion of a Sinner. — Ibid. 1<sup>st</sup> Wm Ezek. XVIII. 27. When the wick- ed man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath commit- ted, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul a- live. — Page 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Of the Duty of Confession. Psal. LI. 3. I acknowledge my transgre- sions, and my sin is ever before me. Of the Efficacy of Prayer. S. Matth. VII. 7. Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. — Page 63.

Of Gods Mercies and Forgiveness. — Ibid. Mar: 15. fes. Dan. IX. 9, 10. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him. Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God. — Page 63.

Of the Natural Belief and Fear of God. S. James II. 19. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the Devils also believe and trem- ble.

Of Self-Examination. 1 Cor. XI. 28. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. — P. 82.

Of the Trial of Sincerity. Eph. VI. 26. Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincer- ity. Amen. — Page 90<sup>th</sup>.

Of the Unity of the Spirit. Eph. IV. 3. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. — Page 102.

Against worldly Care. S. Matth. VI. 34. Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. — P. 114.

Of false Pretences to Godliness. Psal. XV. 5. He that doth these things,

1671- P. 70<sup>th</sup>

1678- Lent.

1671- P. 70<sup>th</sup>

1678- Lent.

1671- P. 70<sup>th</sup>

1678- Lent.

1671- P. 70<sup>th</sup>

1678- Lent.



# at Whitehall-July-1675. A TABLE of the TEXTS.

Page 126 <sup>th</sup>	things, shall never be moved.	stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.—P. 281 <sup>st</sup>
Ibid- before y <sup>e</sup> Fam <sup>ly</sup>	Of the true Marks of Religion, Upon the same Text.—P. 142	The Gathering of Manna. Exod. XVI. 18. And when they did mete it with an Omer, he that gathered much, had nothing over; and he that gathered little, had no lack: they gathered every man according to his eating.—Chelsey-June 6-1675
July-1671	Of the Kingdom of God, and the Obligations thence to Repentance. S. Mark I. 15. The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the Gospel.—157	Nadab and Abihu. Lev. X. 1, 2. And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his Censer, and put fire therein, and put Incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.—Ibid-Oct-11-1674—P. 305
Mar: 2-1679	Of further Motives to Repentance. S. Matth IV. 17. ---Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.—172	V. Sermons formerly Printed July 4 <sup>th</sup> 69—
Ibid- before y <sup>e</sup> Family	Of Gods pardoning Grace. Psal. LI. 9. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.—182	Guildhall Chapell: J <sup>m</sup> W <sup>m</sup> Gurner Mayor
Mar: 9-1678/9	Of Presumptuous Sins. Psal. XIX. 13. Keep thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.	The Churches Peace asserted upon a Civil Account. Psal. CXXII. 8. For my brethren and companions sake, I will now say Peace be within thee.—Page—131
St James's Chapell	Of the Design of Christ's coming into the World. 1 Tim. I. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.—P. 208 <sup>th</sup>	An Assize-Sermon, or Samuel in *—v. Circuit. 1 Sam. VII. 15, 16. And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. And he went from year to year in circuit to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places.—Page 31
Mar: 12-1676	Of the Cause and Effect of Christs Death. Rom. IV. 25. Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Page 29	A Sermon at the Obsequies of the Right Honourable the Lady Jane Cheyne. Prov. XXXI. 30. Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain: but a Woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.—P. 58—y <sup>e</sup> Omittid
Whitehall-Lent- Couple Mar: 26-1671	Of Christ's Exaltation. Phil. II. 9. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.---- Page 231 <sup>th</sup>	A Sermon at the Funeral of Mrs. * Mary Alston. Acts XIII. 39. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses.—Page 70 <sup>th</sup>
Page-195 <sup>th</sup>	Of Indifference in Religion. Acts XVIII. 17. ---And Gallio cared for none of those things. P. 317 <sup>th</sup>	Hezekiah's Return of Praise for his Recovery. Isa. XXXVIII. 17, 18, 19. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption, &c.
St Martins in y <sup>e</sup> Field	This Sermon by a mistake is placed after the following Six.	West-Ham-Com: 1668-P. 83
Sep: 3 <sup>rd</sup> 1672 Com=	VI. Sermons upon Particular Subjects.	TWENTY
= Munion		
Whitehall-Lent		
Apr: 9 <sup>th</sup> 1679	The first Beatitude. S. Matth. V. 3. Blessed are the Poor in Spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	
at Whitehall-bef	The second Beatitude. S. Matth. V. 5. Blessed are they that Mourn; for they shall be comforted.—255	
112 Nov-13-1670	The Third Beatitude. S. Matth. V. 5. Blessed are the Meek; for they shall inherit the earth.—280	
Chelsey-Accent-May	Abraham sacrificing his Son. Gen. XXII. 10. And Abraham	
29 <sup>th</sup> 1679		
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July A: 2-1670		
at y <sup>e</sup> Abby Oct-18-1674		
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Abby Mar: 9-1676		
Palm Sunday		
Ibid-Jan: 10-1675		



\* *Wylsbury* Jos: *Alston* Esq: *Shriff* - *Ash* - *Wed* 9 *Mar*: 8-1671 - an *Abiz* sermon.  
 \* *Finn* sermon - *Chelyca* - *Feb*: 7-1670. - Part 5<sup>th</sup> *Ms* These Discourses  
 are very curious, & usefull, copious, suitable to their Occasions, & noble Addi-  
 =ences. v. *Tharp* TWENTY ONE South, Fiddes, &c. on Public  
 Solemnities. (seek y<sup>t</sup> ye may excell to the (Edifying) of the Church?

# SERMONS

UPON

## FESTIVALS

AND

## ANNIVERSARIES.

*N. B* - *Archi* = *Didascalus* *Schole* *Westmonasteriensis* vide *Starhope*,  
*Nelson* *Hole*, *Lives* of the *apostles*, & our *B. L.* by *Jer. Taylor* D.D. *Bp*

Upon the *Annunciation*. - 17 of *Downe*, & *Conroy*, *Corrected*

IV. Upon the *Nativity*. - 18. by *Wm* *Law* D.D. *Vr* of *Islington*, & *Pres* of *Islington*.

- 1 The *Passion*.  
 2 The *Resurrection*.  
 3 The *Mission* of the *Holy*  
*Ghost*.  
 4 Upon The *Blessed Trinity*.  
 5 S. *Michael's* day.  
 6 S. *John Baptist's* day.  
 7 S. *Matthew's* day.  
 8 S. *Mark's* day.

- Upon S. *Luke's* day. - 9  
 S. *Philip* and *Jacob*. - 10  
 S. *Stephen's* day. - 11  
 Holy *Innocents*. - 12  
 S. *Andrew's* day. - 13  
 The *Gunpowder* *Treason*. - 14  
 The *King's* *Martyrdom*. - 15  
 The *King's* *Birth* and *Re*-  
*turn*. - 16

*Festivals* wanting.

*AB* - *Anniversaries* wanting - *K*. *Access*

1 - *Circumcision* - 2 - *Epiphany*. 3 - S. *Paul's* *Conversion* - 4 - *Purif*: of *V. Mary*

By ADAM LITTLETON D.D.\*

5 - S. *Matthias*. 6 - The *Ascension*. 7 - S. *Pet*: & *Paul*. 8 - S. *James* - 9 - S. *Barth*

10 - S. *Simon* & S. *Jude*. - 11 - *all Saints*. 12 - S. *Thomas* - 13 - S. *John* *Evang*:

L O N D O N,

1 *Fast* (viz: *Ash* - *wednesday*.) *Pol*: - 12.

Printed by S. Roycroft for Richard Marriott.

1 6 7 9.

- *Easter* - *Monday* - 15 \* *Editor* of a *Lat*: & *Eng*: *Dich*: 4to.  
 - *Easter* - *Tuesday* - 16 v. *Antworth's* *Dich*: 4to published by *D*  
 - *Whitsun* - *Monday* - 17 *Sam*: *Patrick* - *at* *London* 1746.  
 - *Whitsun* - *Tuesday* - 18

SEPARATIONS

FESTIVALS

ANNUAL

THE  
LONDON  
D.D.

THE  
LONDON  
D.D.

THE  
LONDON  
D.D.

# Upon the ANNUNCIATION of the Blessed Virgin.

A Sermon Preached at Whitehall, in a Lent-Course,  
before the KING, March 25. 1674.

Out of the Gospel of the Day.

St Luke I. xxviii.

*And the Angel came in unto Her.*



Amongst other Orders, which St Paul prescribes to his people of *Corinth*, we meet with one concerning Womens behaviour in the Church; that they should, in token of their subjection, wear a covering or veil on their head, 1 Cor. 11. 10. and that, says he, ὡς τὰ ἄγγελα, *because of the Angels*. I am not for *Metaphors* or *Figurative* senses of Scripture, where the *Literal* may take place. It had been, I am told, a common received Opinion among *Christians* as well as *Jews*, that the *Angels* were usually present at their publick Assemblies, and bore a share in their solemn Devotions; a proof of which Opinion we have further in another place, *Eccl.* 5. 6. *Say not before the Angel, It was a mistake: Before the Angel, i. e. in the house of God, as the Jewish Masters expound it, from the first verse of that Chapter; so that even in this sense, the Angels may be said to be λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα*, as the Author to the *Hebrews* calls them, *ministring Spirits*; that give attendance to the Churches *Liturgies*, to our publick Offices and Ministrations. The meaning then of the *Apostle* in that fore-recited place is fairly this; That Women should shew a decent, modest and reverent deportment in God's house, as in the sight of God, and his holy *Angels*, who are rationally supposed to attend the Majesty of Heaven in such places as these, where *his honor dwells*.

Hebr. 1. 14.

Psal. 26. 8.

However, sure I am, we have an *Angel* in the *Text*, who has a particular concern in the duty and service of this day. And certainly, if the *Conversion of one Sinner* be matter of joy to those blessed Spirits, as our *Saviour* tells us it is; much more may it be supposed, that they are all concern'd in the gladfom tydings, which one of their own number this day brought, of *Salvation to all Mankind*, and will join with us in our praises and celebrations of that unconceivable Mercy.

Luke 15. 10.

It is observ'd by some, as one signal mark of difference betwixt the good and the evil *Angels*; that *These*, where they appear, bring an infernal horror along with them, and leave behind them a damp on the spirit of those, they shew themselves to: *Those* on the contrary make their appearance serene, and their very surprizes are gracious; so that that character, which was given to one of the *Emperors*, whom they stiled the Darling of Mankind, *Neminem unquam tristem dimisit*, does more truly suit with these *celestial Princes*, that they never leave any one, they favour with their Visits, in melancholy or discontent.



Let then my Reverend *Fathers* and *Brethren*, whose Gravity and Piety may both justify and enforce their severer discourses; let *them* call upon you to *fast* and to weep over your *Litanies*; let *them* with their powerful Oratory charm you into holy *sorrow*, and dissolve your souls into penitent *tears*; let *them* soften and humble your hearts with the remembrance of your *sins*, and the denunciation of *judgments*. This sadning work is not so seasonable for *me* to meddle with. My business is to summon your most cheerful devotions, to put *Laudes* into your mouths, to invite you by the Churches own appointment to a *Feast*, and to tell you, that what time you have already spent in *Fasting*, has been but a due preparation for this high *Festival*.

Judg. 6. 40.

My day stands thus in the midst of *Lent*, like *Gideon's Fleece*, dry, when all the ground about it was bedew'd with wet. For if *Sunday*, our *Weekly Solemnity*, be exempt from the *Quadragesimal* account; inasmuch that by an ancient *Council* they were judged little better than *Hereticks*, who fasted on that day; I say, if that day, by the authority of the Church, be accounted a day of rejoicing; how much more must the *Anniversary* Commemoration of so great a benefit, as *Christs* taking flesh upon him was, be so reputed?

Mat. 11. 18, 19.

Wherefore, if any one there be, that is so strictly pious, as to miss *this One day* in the reckoning of his *Forty*; he may, if he think fit, some other way, at least he may by his Charity on this very day of Joy, make God and himself amends; and he must remember that *Praise*, as 'tis a more comely Service, (it being the sole employment of the blessed ones in Heaven;) so, upon such occasions as this, 'tis as necessary as *Humiliation*; that *Feasts* are enjoined as well as *Fasts*, and are as acceptable; that *Christ* himself came eating and drinking, i. e. by way of Feast, though his *Fore-runner* used another contrary method; and that our Saviours *Incarnation*, (so the *Collect* of the Day calls it) ought to be celebrated with joy; his immaculate Conception being the *Embryo* of our hopes, and the first *Rudiment* of our Salvation.

The Prayer.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and all the Company of Heaven, let us laud and magnify his glorious Name, evermore praising him, who gave his only Son, as at this time, to be Incarnate for us, and by the operation of the Holy Ghost, upon the message of an Angel, to be made Man, of the substance of his Mother, the blessed Virgin, without any spot of sin, to purify us, and make us clean from all sin.

Psalm. 118. 24.

O let us say with the Psalmist, This is the day which the Lord hath made; nay, This is the day, in which the Lord himself was made Man; when having undertaken to deliver man, he did not abhor the Virgins womb; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Let us rejoice in the Lord and his salvation, which he hath so wonderfully wrought for the children of men.

Let us, I say, with one accord offer up our praises and thanksgivings to our gracious God, who has by miraculous contrivances brought such great things to pass for us.

Let us not so much puzzle our Understandings with curious and bold inquiries into the Mystery of his Love, as express our intire Affections in due acknowledgments of his Obligation; and let the Mercy, rather than the Wonder, take up our most concerned meditations.

Let our Souls, and all that is within us, bless his holy Name, for all his benefits, that he hath conferred upon us.

Above all, let us magnify and laud him for ever, for that inestimable benefit of

of our Redemption, wrought and accomplit for us by his Son our Saviour, in the assumption of our nature.

Let us make the glorious Instances of that stupendous Work, so many Instances of our Praise and Thankfulness.

Let us praise him for his holy Incarnation; for his Nativity, and Circumcision; for his Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation; for his Agony and bloody Sweat; for his Cross and Passion; for his precious Death and Burial; for his glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and for the coming of the Holy Ghost.

Let us thank him for the Merits of his Obedience, for the Benefits of his Sufferings, and for the Example of his Holy Life and Patient Death.

Let us acknowledge him in his Word and Sacraments, and all other his Ordinances and Means of Grace.

Let us bless him for the Ministry of his Angels, and the Examples of his Saints, that have gone before us in our Christian course; for his holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, and others, of whatsoever sex, age, or condition, that have departed this life in his Faith and Fear; and let us beg of him his Grace, that we may so follow their good examples, that we at the last together with them may be made partakers of a joyous and glorious Resurrection.

Together with these our hearty Thanks, let us address our humble Requests to him,

For all Mankind, that he would send the Means of Grace, where they are wanting, and make them effectual to those great Ends, he hath appointed them where they are.

For the holy Catholick Church, that he would protect her, and enlarge her borders.

For that part of it he hath here planted amongst Us, that he would be favorable and gracious unto our Sion, and that all that love her may prosper.

For His Most Excellent Majesty CHARLES, by His Grace, of England, Scotland, France and Ireland King, Defender of the Faith, &c.

For His Royal Consort, our Gracious Queen Catherine, the Illustrious Prince James Duke of York, &c. that he would enrich Them with his heavenly Grace, and prosper them with all Happiness.

For the Lords, and others of His Majesties most Honourable Privy Council.

For the Reverend the Clergy, whether Archbishops, Bishops, Priests or Deacons.

For the Two Universities, Oxford and Cambridge.

For all Orders and Degrees of Persons whatsoever among us, the Nobility, the Magistracy, Gentry, and Commonalty; that we may all in our several Places and Stations, fear God, honour the King, and live in Unity and Godly Love.

Lastly, For our selves here assembled, to hear and to handle his holy Word; that both I may so speak, and You so hear, that his Name may be glorified, and our Souls may be edified.

These, and all other our Desires and Acknowledgments, let us recommend to the Father of Mercies, in the Name and Words of his Well-beloved Son, as Himself hath taught us to pray: Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.

*And the Angel came in unto Her.*

The *Angel*, that is, a *Messenger*; so the word in *Greek* imports, so the *Hebrew* name מלאך signifies *Legatus*, an *Embassador* or *Agent*. And this not an ordinary *Envoy*, but one of the superior Rank; one of the chief *Angels*, *Gabriel* by name, sent from *God* to acquaint the blessed *Virgin Mary*, with his good pleasure of her bringing forth a *Son*, who should be *Saviour* of the *World*; and that by the miraculous operation of the *Holy Ghost*, without the help of man, in an extraordinary way; because he was an extraordinary person, no less than the eternal *Son of God*, now to be *Incarnate* and made *Man*; And so it became him, who had *God* for his *Father*, when he was to be made *Man*, to have a pure *Virgin* for his *Mother*; and so was he inrolled in the *Temple* among the *Priests*, if *Suidas* has not deceived us, or his *Author* him; Ἰησοῦς υἱὸς Θεοῦ ζῶντος καὶ Μαρίας τῆς Ἀρκενῆς, *Jesus the Son of the living God, and of the Virgin Mary*.

Let me first plainly deliver the *History*, as to matter of *Fact*, with some necessary *Circumstances* of it; and then let us make some pious *Descants* upon it.

The *Sun* had now, according to the common *Calculation* of *Chronology*, well-near 4000 times, from the beginning of the *World*, with unwearyed paces travelled over his yearly rounds; when *God* our faithful *Creator*, who is never wanting to assert the *Truth* of what he promises, or to make good his engaged *Mercy* to the sons of men; remembering the *Covenant*, which he made at first to our lapsed Parents in *Paradise*, concerning the seed of the woman; which he repeated and appropriated to his friend *Abraham*, that in his seed all the Nations of the earth should be blessed; which more particularly he applied to *David*, a Descendent of *Abraham*, that of his seed he would set upon his *Throne*; of which, in a word, he had given so many Assurances and Instances to several of the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, that at such a time and with such circumstances he would send the *Messias*, a *Saviour* into the *World*; and now finding that all Predictions concerning him were fulfilled, that the *scepter* was departed from *Juda*, and that the *Land* was forsaken of both her Kings, that of *Jerusalem*, as well as that of *Samaria*; as it was foretold in the *Epistle* of the day (taken out of *Isa.* 7. 16.) it should; and that the Expectation not only of his own people, the *Israelites*, but also of the *Heathen World* was grown big, and come to its full maturity for this wonderful Birth; and that now was the fulness of time for the Accomplishment and Discovery of this strange and mysterious *Oeconomy* of his, which had been hid from former Ages, was pleased out of his infinite Wisdom and Goodness to take such a way for the bringing about the eternal Design of his Love, as might at once astonish and indear us; such an *Intricate*, and withall such an *Effectual* Method, as might secure his Purpose by its Concealment; that 'tis hard to say, whether there were more of *Miracle* or of *Mercy* in this Contrivance, whether it had more of *Admiration* or *Obligingness* in it.

Having therefore fully resolv'd with himself, now to actuate those *Hopes*, which he had all along kept on foot, and heightned by his reiterated Promises; one of which Promises had determined and fixed his choice to a *Virgin-womb*, out of which should spring the Desire of Nations; amongst the many Daughters *David's Family* might have afforded, amongst the many

Gen. 3. 15.

Gen. 22. 18.

Psal. 132. 11.

Gen. 49. 10.

Isa. 7. 14.  
Hag. 2. 7.



many Fair and Virtuous of that Nation, since all the *Jewish Ladies*, as I am informed, had an ambition to be the Mother of the *Messias*; and several of the *Nobles* upon that very account, became *Votresses* of perpetual *Virginity*. I say, among so many Competitors, it pleased Him to make a gracious choice of One, and to pitch this high favour upon Her, who, according to Humane Policy might in some respects appear very unlikely for so glorious a purpose: One, who, though of *Royal Extraction*, yet of a very poor and mean condition; that he might defeat the fond expectation of the *Jews*, who from misunderstood Prophecies, instead of *Spiritual Advantages*, and real solid Glories, fancied the *Temporal Grandeur* of their *Messias*, as an earthly Prince; One yet, whom, for her Humility, and other Graces, it might besit the *Son of God*, when he was to put himself into the Disguise of our Flesh, to own for his *Mother*; though she were well content with the Title of being his *Handmaid*; One again, who was betrothed to a Man by right of Kindred, and so though a *Virgin*, yet under covert *Baron*; to keep it from the *Devils* knowledge, who would have been very active to have prevented it, and from *Herods* too, whose tyrannous Jealousie, had he known whom to mistrust, would have been restless in seeking the destruction of the *Messias*, to preserve his own Usurpation.

Luke 1. 38.

Nor was this without other intended Advantages to the *Infant-God* himself; that by this means he might be secured on the One hand from *Infamy*; since, as we read in one of the *Lessons* of the day, *Ecclus. 2. 11. The Glory of a Man is from the Honour of his Father; and a Mother in Dishonour is a Reproach unto the Children*; and his being the Son of a Heavenly Father, would not have shelter'd him from slanderous Aspersions and Reproaches, had not his *Mother* been secured from Dishonour by her *Esponsals*; and on the Other hand, that he might be provided for against *Want* and *Harm*, by the honest Cares, and the honourable Conduct of his supposed Father.

In a word, the *Royal Maid*, made choice of for this eminent service, was *Mary* the *Virgin-Wife*, or at least the *Sponse* of righteous *Joseph*; both of them Lineally descended from King *David*, as appears by the Inrollment of them both at *Bethlehem*, *David's City*.

This being concluded upon, *God*, who does all things in *number, weight and measure*, did not think it fit, that *that*, which had been the Project of so many Ages, *that* indeed, which had exercised his Wisdom from all Eternity; a Business too of that Moment and Consequence both to *God* and *Man*, wherein the whole *Trinity*, all Three Persons, as well as all the Children of Men, the Universality of Mankind, were concern'd, should be done in a hurry. He takes some time therefore for it, and does it with more then ordinary Solemnity and Deliberation.

And first, that he might prepare him, who was to prepare his Sons way before him, and to be the Fore-runner of the *Messias*; he sends away his heavenly Messenger to *Zachary* the Priest, whom he found in his Ministration at the Temple; and for his questioning the possibility of what was promised, a Son in his Old Age; and withall to shew, that the *Levitical Priesthood* it self was ere long to be silenced, he struck him dumb; who, when he recovered his speech, in his most excellent *Hymn* declares his faith in the *Messias*, and blesses *God* for him first, and that salvation which was to be wrought by him; and then for his own Son, whose Office he likewise describes so punctually, as one now grown *Prophet* as well as *Priest*.

Mal. 3. 1.

Luke 1. 68.

It

It pleased *God*, whose great *Art* it is, as 'tis also of his Handmaid *Nature*, to *Time* every thing he does, and to place it in its right season, so to order his Counsels, that the *Messias*, and his *Fore-runner*, should with their *Conceptions* and *Nativities*, take up the four *Quarters* of the Year; the One born at *Midsummer*, the Other at *Midwinter* following; (for so our Ancestors, the *Saxons*, call'd that which we call *Christmas* day, *Midwinterdag*;) and consequently, reckoning the ordinary time of Nine Moneths, as we ought, *John* conceived at the foregoing *Michaelmas*, and our *Saviour* upon this very Day, as we shall shew anon.

Further, we must not pass by another Mystery of *Time*, in the *Conception* of our blessed *Lord*; that the Restorer of the World, as 'tis probable enough to believe, was Conceived in the Womb at that very time of the Year, when the *World* it self was at first created. For it is so rational to suppose, as nothing can be more, that when the World began, the Sun's place was in the beginning of *Aries*, in the *Vernal Equinox*; And though it may be objected against this, that a *Circle* has no point to begin at, and that it was indifferent from what point of the *Zodiack* the Sun at first set out; yet all *Astronomers* have, by Reason, or at least by constant Tradition, fixed the beginning of the Sun's race there; and the *Poets*, who took things, that *Philosophy* and *History* could not help them to, from Records, which were little less than Sacred, do generally make the *World* to begin in the *Spring*. And for some of these Reasons it was, that the *Year* commences from this very Day.

But to return to my *Historical* Account, which I have almost done with.

*Gabriel* having been faithful and successful in this first Message, at six Moneths end is employed again upon another Journey, and dispatched with an Express to *Nazareth*, being graced for his former services with a peculiar favour to make a Visit to Her, who was to be the *Mother of God*. With winged speed he takes and rides his way, arrives at the *City*, which was to make one of the *Messias* his Titles, and without inquiry finds the *House*, where the Heaven-beloved Maid dwelt, which now likely was not *Joseph's*, but some other of her Friends. For, when she was under *Joseph's* care, these favours of *Angelical* Apparitions were usually addressed to him.

He finds her, as 'tis piously believed, in her *Closet*, all alone, at her Devotions; with a graceful *Salutation*, gains her Confidence first in his Person; and, after the Proposal of what he came about, does by a rational Debate satisfy her modest Scruples, and get full credit to his Message; and so leaves her in a blessed Assurance of *God's Love*, and an humble Submission to his gracious *Will*.

Now it was not judged suitable, that her *Virgin-Modesty* should be surprised with such a Blessing without a Message; or that she should be put upon such an honourable Employment, without being told of it first, and prepared for it. And questionless her *Faith* was also necessary for this wonderful *Conception*; who, that she might conceive him in her *Womb*, was first by *Faith* to conceive him in her *Soul*; and this her *Faith* was to be won by the *Angels* Address, and confirm'd by his Discourse; which took so effectually, that it is thought, the Message was perform'd as soon as delivered, the *Holy Ghost* at that very instant coming upon her, and working that *Faith* in her, by which she was impregnated; which was in her not a *Faith of Miracles* only, but a *saving Faith*, as her self owns with joy; *My Spirit*, says she, *hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*.

This, which I have now observ'd, as 'tis the Opinion of learned and pious *Interpreters*, so seems to be made good from the words of the Gospel, *Be it unto me according to thy word.* And then the *Angel* took his leave, and departed from her.

To help our *Piety* with two or three brief *Intimations*. Let us behold how regular and close the Almighty is in his actings, with what Exactness he takes his measures, and makes his steps, in the prosecution of his glorious Designs. O wonderful mercies! O merciful wonders! Let us lose our Thoughts in the Maze of his unsearchable Wisdom, and find them again in the Contemplation of his unspeakable Goodness; and since our finite Reasons are so far from comprehending the Mysteries of his Grace, that they cannot so much as apprehend the Works of his ordinary Providence; let us by the firm Assents and Adherences of a well-grounded Faith, supply the defects of our shallow imperfect Understandings, and piously believe, what we cannot without great impiety dispute.

See again the blessed Advantage of *Piety* and attendance upon holy duties; which procures us the Intercourse and Conversation of Angels. *Zachary* at his Ministration in the Temple, *Mary* at her Devotions in her Closet, have the vouchsafements of these heavenly Visions. They were both Alone; no Company with them. God loves to acquaint himself with the Retired, those who withdraw themselves from worldly Business and earthly Cares, from carnal Entertainments and sensual Pleasures, to attend him in private. And, I must confess, 'tis the Devils Artifice too, to make Solitude his Opportunity of Temptation. So true is that, *Solus Deus aut Demon*; when a Man is Alone, he is very Good, or very Bad. O my Soul, be thou so alone, as to have God in thy Company, and then thou canst not miss of the Comfort and Assistance of his holy Angels.

Further, Take we notice how differently the same Angel treats *Zachary* and *Mary*. The old Priest being Learned and Disputative, he Confutes him, by denying him the power of further Objecting, and makes the Punishment of his Unbelief a Sign for the Confirmation of his Faith; whilst the modest unexperienced and doubting Virgin is easily wrought upon with gentle Persuasives, and readily submits her yielding Reason to the Conquests of her prevailing Faith. O let my Reason always be a Handmaid to my Faith, and may my Learning or Curiosity (whatever it is) never be better satisfied, than in a prostrate Obedience to plain Truth, as God has in his Word revealed it!

I cannot yet leave the Good Angels company, and indeed I have not yet been just to him, by giving you the distinct Character of his Person; which to do, it will be necessary to treat somewhat of the Nature of Angels in general; as to their Employment, their Order, and their Manner of Appearance.

I. Their Employment, is first to attend in Gods Presence, to be ready at his Commands; and, when not otherwise imploy'd, to join in his Praises; (for these active and chearful spirits are never idle) Next to that, to assist Us here below, as God orders them by his especial Providence; to look after the Church, to defend it against its Enemies, (as he that slew so many of the Assyrian Host in one night) to take care of pious Men and Women, and innocent Babes, to preserve them from dangers both bodily and ghostly, (that promise of giving his Angels charge over Us, belonging to all pious innocent persons;) which care of theirs, ceases not even after our dis-

I.

2 Kings 19. 35.

Psal. 91. 11.



Jude ver. 9.  
uc. 16. 22.

dissolution; as appears by *Moses* his body in *S. Jude*, and *Lazarus* in the Parable: And lastly, to do friendly Messages, and to go on honourable Embassies, as occasion requires; whereof we have sundry Examples, both in *Old* and *New Testament*. And this agrees with that account given of them, *Heb. 1. 14.* that they are *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them, who shall be heirs of salvation.*

Dan. 9. 21.

*Gabriel's* particular Office was, as the *Rabbins* tell us, to be *Minister Misericordiae*, a Messenger of God's Mercy; as *Michael* was *Minister Severitatis*, an Officer of his Severity; and therefore they say, that *Michael* flies but with one Wing, *Gabriel* with two; to shew that the Executions of God's Vengeance, are slower then the Dispensations of his Mercy. It should seem, that as *Michael* was the chief Field-Officer, the *Generalissimo* of the heavenly Host, to fight the Lord's Battles; so *Gabriel* was the chief Church-Officer, a kind of *Metropolitan Angel*, to whose care and manage was intrusted the whole Business, that belong'd to the *Messias*; having been sent first to *Daniel*, to inform him of his coming; then to *Zachary*, after to *Mary*, to carry them the joyful tidings of his approaching Advent; and having consecrated the *Baptist* and our *Saviour* both to their Offices, and given them both their Names, before they were born. And as *S. Michael* and all *Angels* have their Day allow'd them by the Church; so neither do's *S. Gabriel*, in comparison of whom all the rest were at this time but puny Angels and Novices, as knowing nothing of that Gospel-mystery, the *Incarnation* of our Lord, (which they desired to pry into, but was committed to *Gabriel's* secrecy alone,) till they learnt it at second hand. as *S. Peter* informs us, from the Church; who herself received it first from *Gabriel's* hand: I say, this *Gabriel* do's not want a distinct Commemoration, as on this Day, having the peculiar Honour to be mention'd with the Blessed *Virgin*, to whom he was sent as an Ambassador of Love from the *Father*, and as a Harbinger, to bespeak an Entertainment for his *Son*, when he was to come down into the lower world.

1 Pet. 1. 12.

I I.

II. The Orders of *Angels*, the *Jewish* Writers reckon to be as many, as there are several Names and Appellations of them to be met with in the *Hebrew Bible*; and some *Christians* gather the like from some passages of *S. Paul*, where he speaks of *Principalities* and *Powers*, and the like; And at this rate, should we take these several Titles for so many Ranks or Classes of them, there would be a very great variety. I shall not offer to persuade any one to that belief; and much less to pin their faith upon what the counterfeit *S. Dennis* has set down in his celestial *Hierarchy*. This we may be sure of, that there is a distinction of Order among them, when we read of *Angels* and *Archangels*; and that that parity of the *Clergy* (which some levelling spirits would bring into the Church) has no President for it, in Heaven at least.

Eph. 1. 21.

Dan. 10. 13.

Acts 12. 15.

Further, Some of them have more honourable *Provinces* and Trusts assign'd to them, then Others have. That every Kingdom and Nation has its *President Angel*, was believed by *Jews* and ancient *Christians* with great consent; as *Clemens Alexandrinus* informs us; (so we read of the *Prince of Persia* in *Daniel*;) And that some particular Persons have some particular *Angels* to attend them, is not so improbable an Opinion, as to be thought an Heresie; as we may gather from *S. Peter's Angel*, which to say was his Messenger, is a pitiful shift; and from the *Childrens Angels*, who are alwayes beholding the face of God, *Mat. 18. 10.* These are those the *Greeks* term *ἀγγέλων & ἀλεξίκακων δαίμονες*, by the *Romans* stiled *Dii Averrunci*.

And

And if there be such *Tutelar* and *Guardian Angels*, as 'tis likely enough there are; it is as likely, that by the provocation of that People or Person, they belong to, especially by Idolatry or sins of Uncleanneſs, they are alienated, eſtranged and driven away, or rather by a juſt God called off and diſcharged from a diſhonourable and grievous Attendance.

This our *Gabriel* then, we have good reaſon to believe, was an *Angel* of the higheſt Order; as being, I may ſay, the *Preſident* and *Guardian* of the *Chriſtian Church*, and the *Truſtee* of all Goſpel-concerns; And who ſo fit as *Gabriel* for theſe things? who ſo fit this day to bring news of the *Incarnation*, which is the very ſum and myſtery of our Religion, as *Gabriel*? whoſe very name ſpeaks his errand, גבר *Geber*, *Man*, אל *El*, *God*.

III. Laſtly, for the *Manner of their Appearance*; 'tis plain, they took particular delight in Humane ſhape. Whether they are veſted with aerial Bodies of their own, of that ſubtle Contexture, of ſo fine a Woof; that they can *contract* and *dilate* them, and caſt themſelves into any *figure* or *ſize*, as they pleaſe; or whether they *assume* and *borrow* bodies for their occaſional Services, I ſhall not pretend to define.

The *Ancients* have thought, (and I think, with as much reaſon as *piety*;) that their *Apparitions* in the *Old Teſtament* in this ſhape, were *Preludia Incarnationis*, Eſſays of our Saviours *Incarnation*; and this Myſtery, it ſhould ſeem, not unknown even to the *Heathens*; witneſs the *Babylonian Monarch*, who ſeeing one walking in the miſt of the fiery Furnace among the *Three Children*, readily affirmed, that *fourth Perſon* to be like the *Son of God*.

This is certain, and we have it from our *Saviour*, that with them there there is no diſtinction of *Sex*; and though we picture them like *Young Men*, they are properly neither *Male* nor *Female*. The reaſon of this is, becauſe being at firſt created in a certain definite Number, they were not to have that number increaſ'd by Propagation, as *Man* was, who was made mortal; and further in lieu of thoſe that are fall'n, Holy Men and Women are in time to make up that defect; who ſhall therefore, *Chriſt* tells us, be ἱσαγγελοι, ranked with the *Angels*; with this privilege above them too, that *Chriſt* who took riot on him the nature of *Angels*, ſhall in his Humanity be Lord and Sovereign of *Angels* as well as *Men*.

It was then a fond Opinion of ſome of the *Fathers*, who in that place of *Genesis*, where it is ſaid the *Sons of God fell in love with the daughters of men*, from which unequal mixture aroſe the *Giant-race*; interpret thoſe *Sons of God* to have been the *Angels*, as if they could be inſnared with mortal Beauties. No; the very *Devils*, when, out of a diabolical Curioſity of trying thoſe ſins, that are proper to the Nature of *Man*, they turn *Incubus*es and *Succubus*'s, (if ſuch things there be) may perhaps in a borrow'd body act, but cannot effect their luſt; and find no other pleaſure, then what their malice ſuggeſts, by ſeeing ſome poor Creature trepanned into ſin and miſchief by their deluſions; this being a ſin, which requires *Two*; where the Parties concern'd, abuſing one anothers *Bodies*, and without repentance damning one anothers *Souls* too, they go to Hell, as the unclean Beaſts went into the *Ark*, by couples.

The Blessed *Gabriel* then, when he was ſent to the Blessed *Virgin*, took up humane ſhape, and appeared like a beautiful Young man; but without the leaſt Umbrage of evil Deſign. They converſ'd as *Angels* do, as *Virgins* do with one another; for *Virgins*, they ſay, are akin to *Angels*. 'Tis true, ſhe was ſtartled at his Entrance, and more at his Errand; ἡ ἁγία δὲ ἐπεὶ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ, when ſhe ſaw him, ſhe was troubled at his ſaying.

111.

Dan. 3. 25.

Mat. 23. 30.

Luke 10. 36.

Hebr. 2. 16.

Gen. 6. 2.

Jam. 5. 17.

saying. When she saw him, she was troubled; and she was troubled at his saying. She was doubly troubled in both her senses of *sight* and *hearing*, at the *Person*, and at the *Salutation*, at the unwonted *appearance*, and at the strange *message* he brought. Such was her Virgin-modesty, such her female Fear, that these two innocent Passions did, by turns, govern her tender Mind, and express her Resentments by the Intermixture of *Roses* and *Lilies* in her ever-lovely Countenance. And perhaps, if we may be allow'd to say it, or to think what is said of *Elias*, that *Angels* have any affections like ours; the heavenly Youth himself, out of that dutiful Reverence he had to the Message, which he was to deliver, might be in some holy Surprise and Transport, to see so *beauteous* and so *vertuous* a creature clad with flesh and blood, so *graceful* and so *gracious* a Young Woman; one upon Earth so like that blessed Company he had left in Heaven.

And indeed during this Interview, the *Virgins* Closet was it self an *Epitome* of Heaven; for as the *King* makes the *Court*, so *Gods* presence 'tis makes *Heaven*; and here the whole *Trinity* was present; the *Holy Ghost*, the power of the Highest overshadowing her; the *Son*, the second Person, at this instant conceived in her Womb; and the *Father*, represented by his great Officer of Address, *Gabriel*.

Col. 2. 18.

I would not be so Vain, as to incur the Censure of those, *S. Paul* speaks of, *who talk idly of things, which they have not seen*; I have the Warranty of Holy Writers, and other good Authors, for what I have said. Nor ought I to balk such a *Topick*, which affords us so much Incouragement to *Piety*, such Comfort in our *Sufferings*, and Joy in our *Services*; when we consider, that the *Angels* themselves, those glorious Courtiers, are deputed by God *ex officio*, by virtue of their office, to attend us in our mortal state.

Acts 23. 8.

I know there are not wanting some, *Sadduces* in our dayes, that deny the very *Subject* of our Discourse, and say that there is neither *Angel* nor *Spirit*; but that these are Fictions and Phantoms of a melancholy disorder'd Imagination; And to such as these nothing less will serve for Conviction, then Ocular Demonstration. But they have *Moses* and the *Prophets*, and the *Evangelists*, the Books of the *Old* and *New Testament*; and if they disbelieve Scripture, neither will they be perswaded, though an *Angel* should come from Heaven, or from tother place. Such are not likely to be favoured with a Confutation; for as *God* never does these things to gratifie mens Curiosity, so it is not the *Devils* Interest to undeceive them. They may remember, that *Balaam's Ass* saw the *Angel*, when the *Prophet* himself, by reason of his boistrous Passion, which had render'd him more Beast then that he rode on, could not.

Num. 22. 26.

Further, they must know, and the very *Poets* will tell them That, that although these *Visits* were frequent in Ancient and more Innocent Ages of the World; yet we that live in the dregs of time, in the *Iron Age*, must not expect those dignations from the heavenly Spirits. Nay, the very *Devil* himself, who used to play such Pranks and Frolicks with our Forefathers in times of Ignorance, (and still do's among the poor *Indians*) is now among *Christians* grown shy; as having a greater hank upon the World, and holding the greatest part of Mankind under less open, but no less certain Obligations of *factious Principles*, or *vicious Lives*. He reigns now in a more demure Way, and exercises more refined Arts. Should he shew himself as he is, so familiarly, as formerly he did; he would fright People out of those snares he has them in, and 'tis not his Business to destroy himself.

But



But to the Thing; beside *Scripture*, *Heathen Story* gives us several Instances, and *Philosophy* furnishes us with Reasons, that there should be a superior Order of Creatures to Man. So *Porphry* in his very *Introduction* to the Art of Reasoning, calls *Angels* ζῶνι λογικῶν ἀθάνατον, making them rational Creatures, only differing from Men in their *Immortality*. I need mention but two famous Instances; the One *Socrates* his *Demon*, who, upon all occasions, was wont to advise him, to warn him of dangers, and to do him the like kind offices. And *Socrates* was reputed a Wise man, and, for ought I can find, a Good man; and dyed upon a fundamental Article of Religion, the *Unity of the Godhead*. The Other is the evil *Genius*, which haunted *Brutus*, and foretold him his doom; And this *Brutus* was one, who, setting aside that villanous Act, of having a hand in his Friends Murder, (engaging into that Conspiracy upon this ground, that he thought himself oblig'd to prefer *Publick Liberty* before *Private Friendship*;) I say, setting aside that, he was so brave a *Roman*, of so undaunted a spirit, that he could not fancy Fear: so that we cannot, if we consult his Character in *Story*, attribute that *Apparition* meerly to his *Imagination*. However it is sufficient to satisfy any pious mind, that the extraordinary Effects of Gods especial Providence are still administred by *Angels*, though they do not appear, as in former times they were wont to do.

But this by the By. To draw something hence for our *Practice*. Learn we here, what *Alacrity* we ought to shew in our services to God, what *Charity* to our Fellow-men; when the blessed *Angels*, who stand alwayes in the presence of *God*, yet do not disdain upon occasion to minister to *Us*. This is it, we desire in the *Lords Prayer*; that we may do *Gods Will here on earth*, as they do it in *heaven*.

There are two sorts of Men more neerly concerned, who often in *Scripture* style go by the name of *Angels*. So in that Text, *Thou shalt not curse the Elohim*, i. e. as it is explain'd in the following words, *Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people*. And the *Angels* of the seven Churches of *Asia* are acknowledged by all Interpreters to be the *Bishops* of those seven Churches.

Acts 23. 5.

Rev. 1. 10.

I am not here to teach my *Superiors* their Duty, but to do mine own; and it so happens now, that I cannot do That, without pressing the Notion a little farther.

*Angel* is a name of *Dignity*, and of *Duty* too; as it shews *Eminence* of place, so it imports a weighty *Office*, and a burthen of *Service*. It was a high Complement, the poor Woman of *Tekeab* put upon *David*, that her Lord the King was as an *Angel of God*; and yet this high Complement in due proportions and mannerly distance fairly applicable to all Officers *Civil* or *Ecclesiastical*. Like *Angels* then they are to be in *Wisdom* and in *Power*; and, like them, to use those Advantages for the *Good* and *Welfare* of Those, that are committed to their Charge. Thus they are *Angels of God*, right *Tutelar Angels* to *Kingdoms* and *Churches*, and to their respective Provinces.

2 Sam. 14. 17.

But when at any time they have abus'd the *Dignity*, and neglected the *Duty*; when they have employed their advantages only to do *mischiefs*, to justify high *oppressions*, and outrageous *lusts*; such have been look'd upon as *Mali Genii*, Evil Spirits, *Angels of the Dragon*; that have indeed possessed the places of *Justice* and *Rule*, but so, as those spirits do the Bodies they enter into, only to rend and tear them, and to do them all manner of injury. Such have been branded in *Story*, and have had lasting *Pillars of Infamy* set up for their Memorials.

The *Angels* have a *twofold* Relation; *one* upward to *God*, another downward to *Men*.

As to *God*, they stand in his presence, and behold his Face; thence called שרי הפנים *Principes facierum*, Princes of the presence, which wait upon the Majesty of Heaven, and are ready to receive his Commands.

As to *Men*, their business is to serve the Interests of the *Church*, to contend, if need be, with her Enemies, and to take charge of all Gods people, as we have before discours'd.

Such should all *Governors*, whether in *Church* or *State*, be,

Rom. 13. 4.

1. *Constant attendants upon God*; for they are, as the Apostle calls them, λειτουργοὶ Θεῷ & διακονοὶ Θεῷ, the *Ministers and Servants of God*.

Further, 'tis their *Excellence* to be like Him, whom they represent; and to bear his Image in *Sanctity*, as in *Authority*; and thus they will be *Gabriels*, the power of God, or if you will, God-like men.

\* Horat.

And it is no less their *Interest* to depend upon God, and adhere to him. Their Dependence upon him makes them *absolute* and *independent* upon any other interest. \* *Dis te minorem quod geris, imperas*, says he.

But when they have broke off this *Affiance*, and forsook God, God has justly forsaken them, and cast them off, like *fallen Angels*; and when they have been forsaken of him, they have, to their sorrow, found themselves quickly deserted by their Friends, their Interests, their Counsels, and have had no where to center. And of this kind, *History*, which spares no man, presents us with many fatal and deplorable Examples, to be warnings to the *Great*.

Mat. 20. 28.

Mat. 23. 11.

2. Again, they are to be *Servants of Community*. Thus the *Angels* condescend, though glorious and excellent Creatures, to do kind offices about us Men, their Inferiours. The great Minister of Nature, the *Sun*, the Dispenser of Life to all things here below, has his name from his service, שמש *Shemesh*, a *Servant*. The *Master of the House*, says the Greek Proverb, is the great *Servant of the Family*. So *Christ* says of himself, that he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.

Phil. 2. 6.

This is his *Example*, and his *Doctrine* is the same; that the Greater any one is, the more he should make himself a *Servant*; laying out his Advantages, whether of *parts* or *power*, whether *temporal* Advantages or *spiritual*, to the Benefit of Inferiours, and equalling the *Eminence* of his *Place* with the *Humility* of his *Mind*; as *Christ* did, who, as the *Apostle* discourses it, being in the form of *God*, thought it no robbery to be equal with *God*; yet made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a *servant*, and was made in the likeness of *sinful men*, of which his gracious Condescension he gave us the first and earliest Experiment, as on this Day, in his holy *Incar-nation*, and wonderful *Conception*; to whom the *Eternal Son of God*, with the *Almighty Father*, and *Blessed Spirit*, be all *Praise*, *Honour* and *Glory*, now and for evermore. Amen.

## Upon the NATIVITY of our LORD.

## THE FIRST SERMON.

*Preached at Chelsey on Christmase-day,*

December 25. 1669.

1 Tim. III. xvi.

*And without controversie, Great is the Mystery of  
Godliness: God was manifest in the Flesh.----*

HE *Apostle* having in this Chapter all along set down the *Qualifications of Church Officers*, and given *Timothy*, the *Metropolitan of Ephesus*, full Instructions, how not only *He*, but *All* whatsoever under him, whether *Bishops, Priests or Deacons*, were to behave themselves in their several Places and respective Charges; *πῶς δὲ ἀνασπεύεσθαι*, after what manner they ought to Converse and Manage Themselves and their great Trust, he does in the close of all, in these *two last Verses*, conclude this matter with two illustrious and important Arguments, to incite them to a reverent *Esteem* and a faithful and careful *Discharge* of so momentous a Trust, which God had put into their hands. Ver. 15.

The One fetch'd à *Dignitate & Prestantiâ Ecclesiæ*, from the *Dignity and Excellence* of the Church, over which these sacred *Officers* are, in their several Degrees of Authority and Spheres of Honour, appointed *Overseers*, and whose Affairs they as *Stewards* are to dispense and administer: and that expressed in two glorious *Epithets*, that the Church is the *House of the Living God*, and that 'tis the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*.

The Other taken à *Majestate & Sublimitate Mysteriorum*; from the *Majesty and Sublimity*, the heighth and the weight of those *Mysteries*, they are by virtue of their Holy Office intrusted with, and to be conversant about: that *without all controversie, Great is the Mystery of Godliness*; i. e. the Law of *Christ* and Gospel-grace; and the great Subject of this Mystery, *Christ the Son of God*, and the manifestation of It made in the *Flesh*, by his becoming the *Son of Man*: the whole Design and Business of *God Incarnate*; all the Transactions of the *second Person of the Blessed Trinity*, whilst he was in the *Flesh*, till his departure into *Glory*: This is the proper Work of the Gospel Ministry. *God was Manifest in the Flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen of Angels, Preached unto the Gentiles, Believed on in the World, Received up into Glory*. Upon this Bottom stands the entire account of all *Evangelical Administrations*.

And both these August Advantages of the *Christian Priesthood* together as well as of the *Christian Religion*, are here set down in *Allusion* and *Opposition* no less to the Temple at *Jerusalem* (which though the *House of God*



## Sermon I.

Heb. 10. 1.

1 Cor. 3. 5.

2 Theff. 2. 7.

God in its time, was not it self the *Pillar and Basis of Truth*, but only the Type and Shadow of the True Church) and to the *Ceremonial Service* there performed; which consisting much in external Sanctity, could not make the *Comers thereunto perfect*, and by consequence was not the *Great Mystery of Godliness*; which Christianity first discover'd and made known to the World. I say no less in Allusion and Opposition to this *Temple* and the *Service* there, then to the *Heathen Temples* also, upon whose Pillars and their Pedestals they were wont to inscribe their *Mythologies* and *Oracles*, and all the *fabulous Stories* of their *Idol-gods*. But alas! those noble Structures, though some of them, as that of *Diana* at *Ephesus*, were the wonders of the World, were dedicated to false gods, *ἀεὶ ὄντοισι θεοὶ*, those that were called Gods, but were not really such; and so could not any of them deserve to be stiled the *House of the living God*: nor any of their Pillars, that were fraught with so much fiction and falshood, to be termed the *Pillar of Truth*.

This as to the *Church*: and as to the *Great Mystery of Godliness*, that's oppos'd to their idolatrous *Rites*, their *μεγάλα ἱερέα*, great Mysteries indeed, but Mysteries of abominable Iniquity; they making the Gods they worshipt to be the Patrons of those Sins they practis'd, and the Practice of those Sins to be the very essential and most mysterious part of their *Worship*.

So then both for its *Church* and *Mysteries*, both for *Verity* and *Piety*, for *Truth* and *Godliness*, the *Christian Religion* has the Pre-eminence above all other Religions in the World; whether That in the *Jewish State*, or Those of *Pagan Idolatry*.

Here's first a true *Church*, the very *Pillar of Truth*; and next here's a great *Mystery*, the *Mystery of Godliness*: taught and discover'd by God himself, *manifested in the Flesh*.

Here is *Truth* on one hand for *Doctrine*; and *Piety* or *Godliness* on the other for *Practice*.

*Truth* to make us *Wise*, and *Piety* to make us *Holy*; and both to make us everlastingly *Happy*.

*Truth*, whereon to build our most holy *Faith*; and *Piety*, whereinto exercise a holy *Worship*.

Again, this *Truth* intrusted to the *Church*: this *Piety* wrapt up in a *Mystery*: but this such a *Mystery*, as is laid open and made manifest in the *Incarnation*; *God manifest in the Flesh*.

Before I proceed, I cannot but think fit to rescue this *Truth* on one hand, from an ill usage the *Romanists* make of it; and this *Mystery* of *Piety* from the unhandsom Evasions of *Socinians* on the other hand.

From the *Churches* being called here the *Pillar of Truth*, those of *Rome* confidently infer their own *Infallibility*. 'Tis true, the Truths of God are given to the *Church* in charge, and are by her hands through a continual succession to be convey'd down to *Posterity*; but then as *Truth* is to be preserv'd in the *Church*, so 'tis *Truth* which preserves the *Church* it self.

'Tis the Duty of the *Church* to keep up *Truth*, and the Prerogative of *Truth* to keep up the *Church*: and thus every *Church* is so long the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, as it keeps and upholds the *Truth*, and no longer.

But alas! *Churches* may, and some do fail in the Duty of their Trust, and by quitting *Truth*, Unchurch themselves; for when *Truth* is gone, *Church* and all is gone.

Nor is every particular *Church* or Society of Christians onely *Fallible*, but

but mortal too, obnoxious alike to *Ruin* and *Excision*, as to *Error* and *Corruption*. Witness the *Ephesine Church*, to whom this character is appropriated, of being *the House of God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth*, once a glorious *Church* of the *Primitive Plantation*; which has now for these many *Centuries of Years*, together with all the *Eastern Churches*, lain lamentably buried in the *Ruins* of barbarous *Ignorance* and *Mahometism*: And who knows in how short a time that fiery *Inundation* may, through *God's just Judgment*, for our not bringing forth *Fruits* worthy of the *Gospel*, over-flow the rest of the *Christian World*, and swallow up *Rome* it self in the first place, and then after that all the *Western Churches* too? In short, as 'tis an absurd *Arrogance* for any particular *Church* to challenge to it self the title of *Catholick* or *Universal*; so for the *Roman Church*, having in so many instances so notoriously departed from the *Truth*, 'tis but fond and peevish *Logick*, when they are charged with *Error*, to reply, *We cannot Err*.

Again, on the other hand, the *Arrians* of old, and the *Sacnians* of late, spoil the *Mystery of Godliness*, by leaving *God* out of it; and make it more *Mysterious* by obscuring the *Manifestation*. *God was made manifest in the Flesh*.

*God Incarnate* is a *Mystery*, that will not go down with their carnal Reason. They will allow *Christ* to have been a *Good Man*, the *Great Prophet*; nor can they deny him neither (because *Scripture* so oft plainly tells us, he was so) to be *God* too, but in a limited sense; a *God*, say they, by *Office* and *Commission*, not by *Nature* and eternal *Generation*. No? Why then does the *Prophet* say, *Who can declare his Generation*? For as to his *Human Generation*, there is two of the *Evangelists* *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke* have declared That. *Deus factus*, say they, not *Deus natus*.

1sa. 53. 8.

Thus proud men distinguish upon the *Son of God*, who for the salvation of *Men*, out of great humility, became the *Son of Man*; and by perverse Reasonings against plain *Texts*, which assert his *Divinity*, deny the *Lord which bought them*.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

But 'tis their *Pride* more than their *Reason*, which prevails with them, that they would seem contented to own his *Doctrine*, and to follow his *Example*, and think that enough to secure them in their way to *Heaven*; and out of stoutness will not own themselves beholding to his *Merit*, to bring them thither. Wherefore, that *Merit* being grounded upon the Excellence of the *Person*, that he was *God* as well as *Man*, they fancy no necessity of uniting the two *Natures* in one *Person*, to make a *God-Man*; so that in effect they quite loose the *Mystery*, by denying the *Manifestation*.

And very probably, as *Cornelius a Lapide* resolves it, This *Article* of the *Christian Faith*, the *Incarnation* of *God*, is here called the great *Mystery of Godliness* or *Religion*; upon this account, that most of the ancient *Hereticks*, the *Arrians*, *Nestorians*, *Valentinians*, *Eutychians*, and several others stumbled at this very *Article*, opposing some the *One*, others the other *Nature* in *Christ*, and denying either the *Divinity*, or the *Humanity* of the *Son of God*.

I must confess, that in this very place we are now upon, some few *Copies* vary in the *manifestation* of this confessedly great *Mystery*; the *Vulgar* reading instead of *Deus manifestatus est*, *God was made manifest*, *Quod manifestatum est*, and thus referring it to the *Mystery*, *Great is the Mystery, which was manifested in the Flesh*.

Some

Sermon I.

Some tell us that Θεός *God*, was put in purposely against the *Arrians*; but who sees not, that it was much more likely, that in those few *Greek* Copies, which leave it out, it might be slipt aside in favour of them.

*Morinus*, to justify the *Vulgar* Interpreter, says, & (which) was by some Transcriber easily chang'd into the Abbreviature of Θεός (*God*) Θε; but to retort upon him, the alteration might as easily be made by some other Transcriber the other way. And whether *He* or *S. Chrysostom*, *Theophylact*, and other *Greek Fathers*, who read as we do, could better know the ancient and true Reading, is by any indifferent person as easily determin'd.

But be it, *God was made manifest in the Flesh*, or be it, *The Mystery was made manifest in the Flesh*, it comes all to one sense, seeing that *God Incarnate* is the great Object of this great Mystery: Nor can, as *Valla* well observes, some of these following *Instances* in the Text, particularly that of being *Received up into Glory*, be, in strict propriety of Speech, literally applied to the Mystery it self without a *Metonymy*: for *Christ* was indeed *taken up into Glory*, ascending up into Heaven visibly in a Cloud; but we cannot properly say that the *Mystery of Godliness*, that is, *Christian Religion*, and the Gospel administration was thus *received up into Glory*.

And though *Erasmus* slight this Exception of *Valla's* against the *Vulgar* Reading, yet he himself is perhaps too justly taxed by *Beza*, and others, for eluding this and other clear Testimonies of the Divinity of *Christ*, by frigid and wrested Interpretations.

Nor does *Hugo Grotius* (a Man, whom all the Learned World hath a high and deserved esteem for) acquit himself much better in this place, by accommodating all these following expressions to the *Mystery*; that it was (for example) *made manifest in the Flesh*; that is, says he, 'twas Preached not by Angels, but by mortal, and, as to outward appearance, weak Men, *Christ* and his *Apostles*; by which his Exposition, he clearly lays aside the great Mystery it self of *God Incarnate*, upon which all *Christian Doctrine* is grounded. And why? Because *Flesh*, says he, in Scripture sometimes signifies Human Infirmities. I, but more properly and usually it doth, and so here certainly it must signify *Human Nature*.

And so to pass by the others, for the last, *Received up into Glory*, he explains it, *Gloriosè admodum exaltatum est*, Most gloriously exalted. This Mystery of *Christian Religion* was highly magnifi'd and advanc'd above all the Precepts of *Philosophy*, and all other Forms whatever of *Moral Institution*, which had been in the World before It, as that which recommended and brought along with it a greater sanctity. And this *Gloss* he makes good, because by ἀναγμωζανδου, he tells us, *to be receiv'd or taken up*, is of the same importance with the Hebrew words נָעִלָה & נָשָׂא, which signify *to be exalted*; Whereas I dare challenge any *Critic* of them all, to shew any one place of *Scripture*, or any approved *Author*, where this Phrase, ἀναγμωζανδου ἐν δόξῃ, *to be Received up into Glory*, is taken in that meaning; whereas it doth plainly and historically denote our *Lords glorious Ascension* into Heaven.

And all this, as if the Blessed *Aposile* here, mentioning a great *Mystery*, had intended to make all his expressions *Mysterious*, and with *Figurative* Speeches to darken the very discoveries and manifestations of it.

This is in a word to impose upon the Spirit of God forced Senses, where 'tis very evident, he design'd to be most plain.

But



But to come to a cloſer view and examination of the Words; we have here,

First a Myſtery: *Without controverſie great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs.*

Next, a Diſcovery: *God was manifeſt in the Fleſh.*

First, the Myſtery: a Secret; 'Tis *Arcanum*: and a Sacred Thing; 'tis *Sacramentum, magnum pietatis Sacramentum.*

Nor is it an ordinary Myſtery; 'tis τὸ μυστήριον, *the Myſtery*, in which are hidden all the Treasures of Divine Wiſdom. For 'tis τὸ μυστήριον θεότητος, *the Myſtery of Godlineſs*, both in general of all Religion; (for ſo the word *θεότης* is commonly taken;) and particularly of Piety, the higheſt Virtue that Human Nature is capable of; and of the right Worſhip of God: which is the greateſt Duty of Man: (and ſo much *θεότης* doth in its ſtricter ſence import.) Col. 2: 3

And this no ordinary Article of Religion neither, no mean Incentive of Piety; but a Great Myſtery; Great in It Self, as Great as God was Great, and as Great too as he was Good: For God was this Myſtery, out of his infinite Goodneſs for our ſakes condeſcending from his infinite Greatneſs to manifeſt himſelf in the Fleſh. And again, Great alſo κατὰ ἡμᾶς, as to our Apprehenſion.

And yet this, though a Great Myſtery, that cannot poſſibly be fathom'd by Human Reaſon, nor comprehended by Natural Underſtanding, will readily be acknowledg'd by Reaſon, and confeſt to be ſo, a Myſtery and a Great Myſtery: By Reaſon (I mean) inlightned, by all that have a good Underſtanding to do thereafter; a Myſtery of Piety to thoſe that are Pious; and ſo Vatablus expounds it well to this purpoſe; *Mysterium quod pii norunt*, a Myſtery which pious perſons know, and are well acquainted with. Pſal. 111: 16

Nay even in that ſort of Men, who pretend to be the greateſt Maſters of Reaſon, and are indeed the verieſt Slaves to it, I mean the Socinians, their very denying the Thing, the Deity of Chriſt, is implicitly a confeſſion of the Myſtery, and a fair acknowledgement, that the thing they deny is above the reach of their Reaſon to comprehend: For if it were not ſo, it would be no ſuch great Myſtery as it is.

So then 'tis a Great Myſtery, *μυστήριον* confeſſedly; *omnium confeſſione*, ſays S. Ambroſe, by the confeſſion of all Men, even Gain-ſayers: *Citra controverſiam*, without controverſie, beyond all diſpute; undoubtedly, moſt certainly; ſo the Syriack: nay further, manifeſt, as the Vulgar Latin, manifeſtly; for ſo it follows: *Manifestatum eſt*, It was made manifeſt; or rather, as we read, *God by it was made manifeſt in the Fleſh.*

That's the Diſcovery: wherein,

1. Who? God.

2. What? Was manifeſt, was made manifeſt, or manifeſted himſelf.

3. How? In the Fleſh:

1. God. All three Perſons of the Godhead; the Father deſigning and ſending his Son to Cloath himſelf with our Fleſh: the Spirit over-ſhadowing the Virgins Womb, and Sanctifying the Birth: but eſpecially the Son the Second Perſon of the Trinity, had the greateſt ſhare in this Days Work; who being God of God, was made Man too, born of a Woman, perfect God and perfect Man. The Word, by whom all things were made, it ſelf

## Sermon I.

Joh. 1. 14.  
Gal. 4. 4.

Phil. 2. 7.

2 Cor. 5. 21.  
Rom. 8. 3.

Heb. 2. 16.

Psal. 50. 13.  
Heb. 10. 5.

Isa. 53. 5.

Mat. 3. 17.

Luk. 2. 13.

Mat. 4. 11.  
Luk. 22. 43.  
Joh. 20. 12.  
Eph. 2. 14.Isa. 11. 12.  
Psal. 68. 18.Act. 1. 9.  
Col. 3. 1.

Ph. 2. 9:10.

now made; *The Word made Flesh, and manifested in the Flesh.* God before all time equal with the *Father*, now born into the World, in the fulness of time; full nine Months (the ordinary time) from the *Annunciation* to the *Nativity*; and the *Ancient of Days*, now turned *Infant*, and the *Father of Eternity* hanging at his Mothers Breast. For,

Ἐφανερώθη, He was made manifest, not ἐφαιέτο, onely in appearance. He did not assume Human Shape onely, but Human Nature; nor was he the Phantom of a Man, but real Man; in every thing like us, Sin only excepted: though for That too, he took up our Sins, as well as our Nature. He was made Man, and he was made Sin for us too; for he was made in the likeness of sinful Flesh.

In the Flesh, He did not take the nature of Angels; 'twas in carne humanā, in human Flesh; as the *Æthiopick Version* has it. Not in the Flesh of Bulls and Blood of Goats; the ancient Victims; but God purposely prepar'd a Body for him, like ours; that he might come in the Flesh, and do his Will; and satisfy his Justice. In the Flesh, that he might suffer for the things done in the Flesh. He was to bear our Infirmities, and by the Stripes of his Flesh in a Sympathetick way of Cure, through the Union of Nature, were we to be healed.

And then, which follows in the rest of the Verse, this great Mystery, and the Discovery of it both, made out by farther Arguments and Probations; and the Manifestation it self made manifest; in that though the Son of God put on weak sinful Flesh, yet he was

Justified in the Spirit; not only made Just, Righteous, and Holy by the operations of the Spirit, keeping him free from that Pollution of Sin, which attends all other Conceptions and Births, but approved and declared by him to be the Son of God, when after his Baptism he came down upon him in the shape of a Dove, accompanied with a Voice from Heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*: above all, by those extraordinary Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, and the supernatural Abilities of working great Miracles,

Seen of Angels; a whole Heavenly Host singing Carols and Anthymns at his Nativity; several of them upon several occasions, during his abode here upon earth, attending him, after his 40 days Fast and Temptation; in his Agony, at his Resurrection and Ascension.

Preached unto the Gentiles; God having now broke down the partition-Wall, and made his Church of as large extent as the World it self; that even the profane and ignorant Heathens might be admitted into the fellowship of Saints, and be made partakers of Gospel-Mysteries. Nor was this Preaching in vain. For he was,

Believed on in the World; several of all Nations coming into the Christian Religion, and bearing witness to the Truth of the Gospel; till at last Christ having made several Essays and Experiments of the Conquests of his victorious Faith over the World, set up the Standard of his Cross, as a Banner and Ensign, to which the Nations were to resort; and led his Captivity Captive, and Ascended up on High,

Received up into Glory; riding upon a Triumphant Cloud to Heaven, where he sits at the Right Hand of the Father in Glory, advanced far above all Principalities, having obtained a Name above every name, That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in Heaven, and of things on Earth, and of things under the Earth.

But I shall not insist on these Instances, as being but Appendages of our great Subject, the Incarnation, which is the very Summary of our Faith, and the Abstract of all Gospel-knowledge. Having

Having therefore spoken of it by Parts, I shall gather it up into one *Proposition*, as the *Text* recommends it: and 'tis this, that *God manifest in the flesh, is the great Mystery of Christianity*; or, according to the distinction of the Word we here render *Godliness*, that *the Incarnation of Christ the Son of God is the main Article of Christian Religion, and the most considerable Object and Motive to true Piety and Devotion*.

First, 'tis the Great Mystery of *Godliness*, that is, of Religion, both *Absolutely* in It self, and *Comparatively* to Other things that are lookt upon as *Mysterious*.

1. *In It self*; as to the *Designment* and *Accomplishment* of it; as to the *Importance* and great *Concerns* couch'd under it; and as to its various and gradual *Discoveries*.

2. *Comparatively* to other Mysteries, whether the Ordinary or more Unusual *Phænomena* of *Nature*, or the admirable Effects of *Art*, or the strange Contrivances of *Policy*, or the Rules of *Philosophy*, and the Forms and Methods of other *Religions*, or lastly all the other Articles of *Christian Religion* it self. In all which respects it will be found, that *without Controversie* the Mystery of the Incarnation, *God manifest in the Flesh*, is the Highest and most Transcendent *Mystery* of all.

1. What a Glorious and Weighty *Design* must this needs be; when, as for the very Making of Man, the whole *Trinity* was met in *Council*, with a *Faciamus Hominem*, Let us make Man; so here for his Restoration after his Fall, not only all *Three Persons* were assembled, but all the *Divine Attributes* also were summon'd to the debate, to see what they could all say; and how did all the *Angels* in Heaven shout and clap their wings for joy, they should have new Companions from Humane Race in Glory, to supply the room of their Apostate Fellows, when 'twas resolv'd that *Man* should be *Redeem'd*?

Gen. 1. 26.

And when *Satisfaction* however was judg'd necessary, and *Justice* stop'd the intercessions of *Mercy*, and Mans *Pardon* could not be obtain'd without an *Expiation* of his sin; and no *Reconcilement* was to be hop'd for, unless *Wrath* were first aton'd; and it was utterly impossible for *Angels* and *Men*, and all created Powers, to make that *Satisfaction*; that then *Divine Goodness* should propose, and *Wisdom* contrive, and *Omnipotence* undertake such an *Expedient*, as *Men* and *Angels* durst never have thought of, and such as the whole Creation trembles at the very apprehension of, that *God* himself should suffer in *Man's* stead, to satisfy his *Justice* to *Sin*, and at once to express his *Mercy* to the *Sinner*; and to this end, for the sake of *Men*, should become *Man*, that he might be in a capacity of suffering. How did *Mercy* and *Truth* hug and embrace one another; *Righteousness* and *Peace* greet and kiss each other?

Pl. 85. 104.

That then the *Son* the *second Person*, of his own Inclinations, yet by the Appointment of the *Father*, and the Suffrage of the *Spirit*, stepped forth and engag'd by an eternal *Covenant*, to take upon him Humane Nature, and unite it to himself, that as *Man* he might suffer for the sins of *Men*, and as *God* might satisfy for them.

O *Mystery of Love*! O *Wonder of Mercy*! O the stupendous Work of our *Redemption*!

2. Nor was the *Performance* less admirable than the *Contrivance* of this great *Mystery*; as to the *Time*, and the *Place*, and the *Manner*, and all the *Circumstances* of his coming;



## Sermon I.

Iia. 9. 6.

Hag. 2. 7.

Acts 17. 23.

Matt. 2. 3.

Joh. 1. 11.

Joh. 7. 48.

Matt. 13. 55.

Luk. 2. 16.

Matt. 1. 18.

Phil. 2. 7.

In all which, though all the *Prophecies*, which had foretold of the *Messias*, were exactly and punctually fulfill'd; though just before his Birth, in *Augustus's* Empire, the whole World was at peace, and *Janus's* Iron Gate was shut on purpose to make way for the entrance of the *Prince of Peace* into the World; that now all People were at leisure to look after Him, who was to be the *Desire of Nations*: and though not only *Sacred Predictions* pointed him out to his own Countrymen, but even *Heathen Oracles* (besides the *Sybils* Verses) proclaim'd Him to the World, confessing at last that an *Hebrew Child* had commanded them silence; and though the World it self stood on tiptoe, at that time, in expectation of some extraordinary Birth, insomuch that they set up Altars, as it had been on purpose, to welcome *Christ* into the World, *ἄγνωστο Θεῷ*, To the *Unknown God*; besides, that the hopes of *Israel* were full ripe for the accomplishment of those *Prophecies* which concern'd the *Messiah*: so that with a ready belief they flocked after several idle Pretenders and false Impostors, whom the Devil rais'd on purpose about that time (to discredit the true *Christ*, and defeat, if possible, the purpose of his coming, by making People the less regardful of Truth, for having been deceiv'd) and all *Jerusalem* was in a commotion at the *Wise Mens* arrival, as being easily persuaded of the probability of their Message and Relation.

Notwithstanding all this, that *Christ* should, for all this, come into the world, and the world not know him, to his own, and his own receive him not; that he should come a Saviour of Men, and yet should be such a Stranger amongst them, that he was own'd at his Birth only by two or three simple *Shepherds*, and in his Life by half a score of ignorant *Fishermen*: and None of any credit or fashion inquir'd after him, but Those that design'd to destroy him; Such as the *Pharisees*, who at last pursu'd him to his Cross, and *Herod*, who celebrated the Feast of his *Nativity* with a Massacre, and sacrific'd to his tyrannous Jealousie some hundreds of poor *Innocents*, (without any disparagement to *St. Stephen*) the *Protomartyrs* and earliest Witnesses of our *Infant God*.

O mysterious *Advent*! O strange Disguise and wonderful Concealment of a God *Incognito*!

For though this were the Time for the *Messias* to come, yet who would take a *Carpenters* Son to be him? Though *Bethlehem* was the place, who would look for him in a *Manger*? And though a *Virgin* brought him forth, yet she was *espoused*; on purpose, one of the *Fathers* tells us, that the Devil might not find it out, who would have been very busie to have interrupted the great Work he came about.

Thus it became *God* to be born, thus to *manifest* at once, and conceal himself in the *flesh*, when he came to suffer and dye for us Sinners by the hands of sinful men; which could not well have been, had not he appear'd in the form of a *Servant*, made himself of no reputation, and submitted his *Glory* to these vile Indignities.

3. For in the next place let us unfold this *Mystery* a little, and see what great *Concerns* lie under it. Things of the greatest Importance, that could not have been carried on but by extraordinary Methods.

The height of *Wisdom*, and the depth of *Humility*, and the breadth of an expanded *Love*, were all met to make up the full dimensions of this *Mystery*.

The whole World was concern'd, and which is more than that, God himself.

The *Glory* of his Justice and his Mercy, as well as the *Salvation* of Men lay at stake in this great Transaction.

Sermon I.

In order to this, the *Law* in all its *Precepts* was to be fulfill'd, in all its *Curses* to be satisfied, in all its *Commands* and *Demands* to receive its full completion; the *Gospel* to be promulgated, and a declaration to be made of new Rules in *Christ's* own Person; and the sanction of the *second Covenant*, not of *Works*, but of *Faith*, to be interchangeably sign'd, seal'd and deliver'd betwixt *God* and *Man*, in the blood of his own Son.

Heb. 8. 6.

All this could not have been done, but in that mysterious way it was done in.

Hence it was, that he took up his first Lodging in a *Stable* amongst the Cattle, as if he had come to be the *Saviour* of Them, as well as of Men; being by one perfect oblation of himself, to put an end to all other *Sacrifices*, as well as to take away *Sins*.

This the *Psalmist* fears not to affirm, speaking of Gods mercy, *Thou savest*, says he, *both Man and Beast*.

Psal. 36. 6.

Hence it was, that he appeared in so mean a Condition, that as his *Sanctity* expos'd him to the Envy and Malice of the Rulers; so his *Poverty* might lay him open to publick Contempt, and make him lookt upon by the people as one fit, what the High Priest Prophetically said, to die for the Nation.

Joh. 11. 50.

Had he come with external *Pomp*, and cloathed himself with the *Majesty* of an earthly Prince, as was expected from those glorious mistaken *Predictions* of Him, the great Business he came about, had been in great danger of miscarriage.

4. Nor was *lastly* the very *Manifestation* of this *Mystery* less mysterious.

They heard his *Doctrine* and admired; they saw his *Miracles*, and were astonished; and yet they knew not what to make of Him.

Thus though he were *Manifested in the Flesh*, yet still 'tis a *Mystery*, not to be apprehended by *Reason*, but to be laid hold on by *Faith*, and made out and *Justified in the Spirit* of Believers, by the Spirit of God.

*No one*, says he, *comes to me but whom the Father draws*. It must be *Revelation*, brings us to the knowledge of it.

Joh. 6. 44.

This was the *Mystery* hidden from the Wise, and revealed to Babes; kept close from former Ages, and made manifest in its due Time.

Matt. 11. 25.  
Col. 1. 26.

'Tis true, there were all along from the beginning some Glimpfes and imperfect Discoveries of this great Design of Gods love to us in *Christ*; faint Adumbrations under the *Law* of good things to come: and some peculiar Favourites had clearer foresights vouchsafed them. *The Seed of the Woman* was the *Gospel of Paradise* to comfort our penitent first Parents after their Fall. And *Eve*, as *Mary* did, kept that saying in her heart, and presently applied the Promise; for at the Birth of her first Child, she call'd him *Kain*, upon this confidence: says she, \* *I have obtained a Man the Lord*, as some read from the *Original*, not as we render it, *I have gotten a Man from the Lord*. But *She* was not to be the Woman, that was to bring forth the Saviour of the World: That Honor was reserved for one of her Grandchildren after many Descents, the *Royal Maid*, the *Blessed Virgin Mary*. Much less was *Kain* to be the Man, or so much as to be concern'd at all in him. *Christ* likely chose the Younger House all along. Righteous *Abel* was to be his *Type*, and Holy *Seth* his Progenitor.

Heb. 10. 1.

Gen. 3. 15.

Luk. 2. 19.

\* Gen. 4. 1.

קניתי איש  
מאד יהוה  
per Appositionem.

*Enoch* cited in the Epistle of St. *Jude*, Prophesied of his *second* coming to Judgment, and was himself the Prolusion of his *First* coming

Jude 14.

## Sermon I.

coming in the Flesh, having walkt with God, and been translated bodily into Heaven.

Joh. 8. 56.

*Abraham*, I may say, by Faith kept *Christmas*; for he saw *this day*, and was glad; and his Offering up of *Isaac* was but an Essay and Representation of God the *Fathers* giving up his *only begotten Son*, both Children of the Promise.

Deut. 28. 15.

*Moses* tells the People, God would raise them up a *Prophet* like him; a *Man* as he was, and a great *Lawgiver* as he was; but one of far more eminent Dignity.

Heb. 3. 3.

Psal. 110. 1.

*David*, though he knew *Christ* should be his *Son*, yet calls him his *Lord*; for though he was of the Seed of *David* according to the *Flesh*, yet he was declared by the Spirit to be the *Son of God*.

Rom. 1. 3. 4.

It would be infinite to go over all Passages, that look this way: and to draw a Parallell betwixt the *Prophets* of the Old Testament, and the *Evangelists* of the New, to make up a compleat History of the *Messias*.

Mat. 4. 16.

The very *Heathen World* was not without strange Discoveries of this kind, and those that sat in Darknes, saw a great Light, even before the Sun of Righteousness was risen.

Numb. 24. 17.

'Twas *Balaam's Star* directed the *Wise Men* out of the East; who though a *Prophet* was a *Moabite*.

Job 19. 25.

*Job* a Holy Man, yet out of the Pale of the *Jewish Church*, questions not but to see his Redeemer with those very Eyes.

Wherefore they are too severe, that censure the *Sibillyne Oracles* as *Pie fraudes*, Holy Cheats; since the Prince of *Latin Poets* has, out of the Writings of *Sibylla Cumana*, contrived such a Poem, his fourth *Eclog*, as I cannot but Christen it *Genethliacon Nascenti Deo*, a *Christmas Carol*, a *Pastoral* upon *Christ's Nativity*; and he is there of Himself, without any ones help, *Virgilius Evangelizans*; that piece looking like the just Translation of one of the Chapters of *Esay*, appointed *Lessons* for the day.

Thus has this great Mystery of *Christ's coming* in the *Flesh* been all along by parcels and degrees imparted and insinuated into the amazed World; who yet, when he was come, was understood but by few, and is still, though he has for our fuller information left us in the Writings of his *Apostles* the whole *History* of his Life; and in his *Church* a Settlement of doctrinal Truth, yet cannot be apprehended but by Faith, which is to be wrought in us by the inward workings of the Spirit.

Thus much of the *Mystery in it self* considered. I should now speak of it *Comparatively* to other Mysteries, whether in *Nature*, *Art*, *Policy*, *Philosophy*, or in other *Religions*, or in the other *Articles* of *Christian Religion* it self; in which respects this would appear to be the *Great Mystery*. But I shall pass that at present; and to close all, consider this *Mystery of the Incarnation*, as the great Motive to *Piety* and *Devotion*, which was the second part of our distinction of *Godliness*; which will serve instead of *Application*.

*God manifest in the Flesh* is the great *Mystery of Godliness*. If God then clothed himself with our *Flesh*, we should make it our earnest request to him, that he would cloath us with his *Spirit*; and that, as he assum'd *Human Nature*, so we may be made Partakers of the *Divine*.

2 Pet. 1. 4.

How should all our *Affections* be imploied and taken up in the consideration of that great *Mystery*, which busied all the *Attributes* of God?

How should we *Sorrow* for Sin, which provoked his *Justice* so far, that rather



rather than let that go unpunished, his Only begotten Son, his Well-beloved Son must put on Flesh to make him capable of suffering for it.

How should the Mercy of God in sending his Son to make satisfaction for us, which we were no ways able to make for our selves; excite and transport our Love?

How ought we to prize his Goodness, to admire his Wisdom, and to give him the Praise of his Power; that has brought these mighty things to pass for our Redemption?

How ought we to Rejoice, and give Thanks for this Manifestation of God in the Flesh, not in provisions for the Flesh; but in all Spiritual Joy and Charities to the Poor? Rejoice in the Lord, and then with the Apostle, again I say Rejoice.

Phil. 4. 4.

How ought we above all, to endeavor to follow that great Example, which Christ manifested in this Flesh of ours, in all Innocence, Meekness, Humility, Charity, and in all acts of Mortification?

This will be the right Mystery of Godliness indeed, when Christ shall be thus formed in us, and we shall be renewed in the spirit of our minds; and as he put on our Nature, so we shall put on Christ, and shall be found in him.

Gal. 4. 19.  
Eph. 4. 23.  
Rom. 13. 14.  
Phil. 3. 9.

'Tis said by one of the Fathers, of the Blessed Virgin, *Beata, quod utero; beator, quod animo*: She was Blessed for conceiving Christ in her Womb; but more Blessed for conceiving him by Faith in her Heart.

This was the ground of her Magnificat; My Soul doth magnifie the Lord; and this we may all do. Every Soul may thus be Θεοτόκος, *Deipara*, conceive and bring forth God in a Holy and Heavenly frame of Spirit, and in a suitable conversation.

O! may we all be truly united to Christ by his Spirit, as the two Natures were Hypostatically united in his Person, that we also may be one with him, as he and the Father are One.

Joh. 17. 11.

This Blessed Union (you that mean to partake of the Holy Table I now speak to) if you come worthily, may be much furthered by your Communion.

This, this is *Magnum pietatis Sacramentum*. This Sacrament is the great Mystery of Godliness; by which, as we are by the other of Baptism ingrafted into his Mystical Body, so we are by this mystically fed and nourished to everlasting life, and grow up in Christ till we come to be perfect Men.

Eph. 4. 13.

Here, here is God manifested in the Flesh: I mean not in a Carnal Presence, but Mystically and Sacramentally, and yet Effectually too in the Symbols and Representations of his Blessed Body and Precious Blood, the virtue whereof is to be Justified and made out by the Spirit.

May we by the assistance of Gods good Spirit, so eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood, in which he has by this Sacrament manifested himself to our outward Senses, that he may also manifest himself and the power of his Grace to our Inward Man, that we may feed on him in our heart by Faith with Thanksgiving.

Now to Thee, O Blessed Jesu, our Redeemer, God Manifest in the Flesh, together with God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, Glory, and Power, now and for evermore, Amen.

## UPON THE NATIVITY.

## THE SECOND SERMON.

*Preached at Chelsey on Christmash-day,*

December 25. 1672.

S. John I. 14.

*And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us,  
( and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the onely  
begotten of the Father ) full of grace and truth.*

Joh. 13. 23.



OUR holy Evangelist, stiled the *Beloved Disciple*, who was used to lie in the bosom of his Master, begins his Gospel in that high strain of Seraphick contemplation, as if he had been the gremial of Eternity too, and had copied the Notions and Scheme of his Divinity out of the *Idea's* of the Divine Understanding. *In the beginning*, sayes he, *was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* This in imitation indeed of *Moses* his stile, but at a far more lofty rate. For whereas the *Jewish* Lawgiver, who was the most ancient and first of Writers, contents himself to set the *Æra* of his History, and the account of time in the Creation of the World, reckoning *ab Orbe condito*; our *Evangelical* Writer here begins higher, telling us of another *Beginning* long before that, of the same date with the Being and Essence of a Deity, when God and the Word co-essential, coeternal and coequal did, in their several Subsistences, enjoy a blessed communion and mutual intercourse betwixt themselves in the same nature before all time, before any thing as yet was created; this Word himself being assistant and concern'd together with the Father in creating the World, as it follows, *ver. 3.*

It should seem that from that holy Breast, whereon he was wont to repose himself at the ordinary times of refection, *John* had received extraordinary inspirations, which in a particular manner discover'd to him the highest and deepest, the sublimest and profoundest Mysteries of Religion and Love, which are the two things, the one for *Theory*, the other for *Practice*, that breathe and live in all this blessed Apostles Writings and Discourses. Infomuch that upon this account, pious Antiquity deservedly gave him, in a particular and eminent manner, the title of *John the Divine*; so you find him called in his Book of *Revelations*.

And further upon the same consideration of the tousing flights of this holy Penman, *S. Hierom* and others of the Fathers, among the four living Creatures, which attend the Throne and the Lamb, have with unquestionable

nable reason assign'd to him the character of the *Eagle*, who being to set down the History of Christ, soars aloft into the ætherial Regions, and gives us first demonstrative proofs of the *Divinity* of the Word, before he comes to treat of his *Incarnation*. And then from this glorious dazzling height of meditation he descends, in his descent bringing down along with him in the middle Region, his Name-sake the *Baptist* bearing witness to the Word, and at last, like a true *Eagle*, which from above the clouds yet looks down upon the ground, where the carcass lies, in this 14<sup>th</sup> verse, he makes a stoop with an eager and sharp-set Faith, to the *Flesh* and Humanity of Christ;

Sermon II.

Rev. 4. 7.

Mat. 24. 28.

*And the Word was made Flesh, &c.*

Where we have four remarkable *Instances* to pitch our Meditations upon.

1. A great *Mystery*; indeed the greatest *Mystery* of our Religion; the Word Incarnate. *And the Word was made Flesh.*

2. A strange *Concealment* of this glorious *Mystery*. *He dwelt among us.* ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. *He pitched his Tent*, he set up his *Tabernacle* in us, in our nature, and conversed in his Humanity amongst us.

3. A plain and open *Discovery* or *Manifestation* of this *Mystery*. *We beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father.*

4. The true *Intent* and *Purpose* on Christ's side, and the blessed *Benefit* and *Advantage* on ours, of all this; to which the *Mystery*, together with its *Concealment* and *Discovery* was design'd. *Full of grace and truth.* He was full, that we might all receive of his fulness, as 'tis express'd, ver. 16.

To gather these Heads into *Propositions*, and so to discourse of them, would be more than an hours task; we shall therefore as briefly and as plainly as we may, handle them as they lie; and so, as rather by short and easie Intimations to help you in your pious Reflections, then by long and elaborate Periods to enlarge my self upon mine own.

First then the *Mystery* is like the Subject of it, Wonderful. *His Name*, sayes the Prophet speaking of Christ, *shall be called Wonderful*; and such are all the passages whether of Prophecy or History, that relate to him, that relate any thing of him.

I.  
Isa. 9. 6.

Nor is this *Mystery* bigger with Wonder, then it is with Concern: no less Necessary to be studied, then it is Difficult to be understood. Here's God at one end of it, the Son of God at least, the *Eternal Word*: there's the Height of the *Mystery*; and there's *Man*, our selves at the other end; *Flesh*, humane Nature: there's the Depth of it.

And how came these two distant Principles, the *Word*, and the *Flesh*, to be put together in the Text? Why! such was the Love of God, such was the Necessity of Man, that thank'd be God, they are met, *Divinity* and *Humanity* both in the same *Person*, and agree well together. *The Word was made Flesh*; ἐγένετο; he was made *Flesh*, and he became *Flesh*.

*He was made Flesh* by the Fathers Appointment; and *he became Flesh* by his own free and voluntary Undertaking.

Again, *he was made Flesh*, not so as to lose that subsistence, which he had before, not so as to be no longer God; but so as to acquire another Nature to that which he had before, and by that means *became* that which he was not before, viz. Man also; so that 'tis the same Christ still, both as

E

Word,



## Sermon II.

*Word*, and as *Incarnate*. I say, the *Person* is not doubled or alter'd from what he was, but onely the same subsistence enlarged; and spread into two distinct Natures, which from the beginning, till the Incarnation, stood separately in one.

In a word, Christ here called *the Word*, was *God* from all Eternity, and in fulness of time was made *Man* too, not by impairing or laying aside the Godhead, but by assuming the Manhood, and advancing it together with the Godhead into a perfect and blessed Union of the same Person.

But these mysterious words will deserve a closer and more particular scrutiny.

*The Word*, Who he is, and Why so called.

And *Flesh*, What to be understood by it, and Wherefore such a Mystery exprest in such a carnal Notion.

By *the Word*, you all know without my telling, is meant *Christ* the second Person of the blessed Trinity, the Eternal Son of God, *the onely begotten of the Father*, as the *Text* it self explains *the Word*.

And though this seem a peculiar *Title* applied to Christ by this *Evangelist*, who, as I noted before, was favor'd with greater inearments of his Master, than others of the Disciples were; yet there are Learned men, that think the other *Evangelists* and *Apostles* are not altogether Strangers to this notion of the *Word*.

Mat. 22. 41.

Whatever the use of the word be in the New Testament, the *Jews*, to be sure, were well enough acquainted with it in the Old; witness the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, who usually, instead of the Lords doing this or that, saith, that *the Word of the Lord* did it: so he tells us in the History of Creation, as *S. John* here does in the beginning of this Chapter, that *the Word of the Lord* created; and in the 110th *Psalms*, which doth manifestly belong to Christ, as Christ himself proved to the face of the *Pharisees*; *The Lord said unto my Lord*, saith he, *The Lord said unto his Word*. Nay further, in the very *Alcoran*, which is the *Turkish Scripture*, perhaps from the authority of the Old Testament, Christ is called *the Word*, which one of their Expositors acknowledges to be the Son of *Mary*.

amelius, a follower  
rather of Heracle-  
tus.

And still, that which must increase our Admiration, as well as inform our Understanding, the ancient *Philosophy* of the very *Heathens* was not ignorant of this mysterious Term, inasmuch that one of *Plato's* followers, as a Reverend Person tells us, meeting with this Gospel of *S. John*, cried out presently, that This *Barbarian* (for so the *Grecians* call'd all strangers) jump'd in opinion with his Master *Plato*, by making the *Word* a principle of life and being. And indeed that very *Philosophy* of the Ancients will be sufficient to resolve us in our next Inquiry, which is,

Hebr. 1. 3.

How Christ the Son of God comes to be represented under this notion of the *Word*. For they own'd two eternal Principles, coessential and co-existent, Νῆς καὶ Λόγος, the *Understanding*, and the *Word*; the *Word* being the proper and immediate Issue of the Mind, which by a reflexive act upon it self doth instantly beget the *Word*, as its own most natural Image and representation, in that sense as the Author to the *Hebrews*, saith Christ is the *express image and character of his Fathers person*.

Nor yet need we be beholden to divine *Plato* for this Interpretation; since the *Christian Fathers* are wont by this similitude to explain and illustrate the eternal Generation of the *son*, and his Consubstantiality with the *Father*. But

But then further, we are to take notice, that in the Original what we render the *Word*, may as rationally and properly be translated *Reason*; whereupon Christ is also called the *Wisdom* of God, that being the highest pitch and improvement of Reason.

At least we must distinguish between the eternal and essential *Word*, which is Christ himself, God equal with the Father, and the external *Word*, which is only Instrumentary to our Salvation.

Now if this outward Word of God, *Verbum audibile*, the Word which we hear with our outward ears, be such an inestimable benefit, that 'tis compar'd to a hidden Treasure, and requires all we have for its purchase; what value ought we to have for Christ himself the *living Word*, in whom are hid all the Treasures of heavenly wisdom? especially when this *Word* also is made familiar to our senses, that as the other is the object of our hearing, so this is of our sight. 'Tis *Verbum Visibile*, the Word made manifest in our Flesh. For the *Word was made Flesh*.

Sermon II.

1 Cor. 1: 24.

Mat. 13: 44.

Col. 2: 3.

*He was made Flesh*, that is, he was Incarnate, and made Man, as the *Nicene Creed* explains it; for so בשר *Flesh* in Scripture language imports. *In thy sight shall no flesh be justified*; and *flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee*, that is, not Man, but the Spirit of God, and in many other such instances; yet so, as that *Flesh* denotes whole Humane Nature, and includes in its Notion the Reason and Will, the Senses and Affections, those things which do properly constitute and denominate us *Men*, and by which we act as *Men*, in a distinct being and different operations from brutish Nature.

Rom. 3: 20.

Mat. 16: 17.

The more noble and excellent parts of Man then, the Soul and Spirit, with their Faculties and Perfections, which are not so obvious to the Eye, are comprised in the outward bulk and visible shape of the Body. For that *Christ* assumed whole humane Nature, S. *Athanasius* gives us to understand, plainly affirming that he was *perfect Man*, as well as *perfect God*, of a *reasonable Soul*, and *humane flesh subsisting*. And if need were, Scriptures might be abundantly produced to confirm this Orthodox Assertion.

It were vain and absurd then for any one to fancy, that he took only *flesh*; nor is it a less absurd contrivance in some, that in his Conception and Nativity he only assumed flesh from the substance of his Mother, and that the second Person did, as they say, actually subsist in a rational Nature made purposely for him, at the beginning of the World: as if he had been made *Man* before he was *Incarnate*. These are Heretical and foolish Niceties, too slight and precarious to deserve our Refutation.

But *Why* then is this mysterious action set forth in so mean a dress, that so grossly favors of carnality? *The Word was made flesh*? The meanness of the Expression greatens the Mystery. And it was convenient, considering the design that Christ came about into the World, that the business should be thus exprest. *Flesh* implies the *Weakness*, and it implies the *Corruption* of humane Nature. And upon both these accounts Christ came, and clothed himself with our flesh.

1. It imports great *Weakness* and *Infirmity*, both in respect of death, and of all other diseases and casualties, to which we are upon the very terms of nature, through the condition of our mortality, all of us every minute liable.

Now Christ came to bear our infirmities, to support our weakness, to heal our distempers, and to conquer death it self, which was the last Enemy he had to subdue. He did as I have heard of some Physicians, who

*Sermon II.*  
Hebr. 2. 18.

that they might the better and more successfully apply to their Patients, practis'd upon themselves first. He experimented these inconveniences of our nature in himself, that he might know how to pity and relieve those that are afflicted.

And indeed his whole Life, from the *Cratch* to the *Cross*, was but a continual Conflict with hardships, and a constant Exercise in the School of patience, in hunger and thirst, in heats and colds, in watching and fasting, in stripes and cruel scourgings; and in all those severer circumstances, which mortal life subjects the most miserable of Men to.

Acts 14. 22.

And we are by the common rule of Christianity to follow our Captain in all such rencounters, and to fill up his sufferings, as having no promise of coming to the Kingdom, but through many tribulations and persecutions, nor of gaining the *Crown* but by bearing the *Cross*.

1 John 5. 4.  
2 Tim. 2. 12.

And if this we do, he hath assur'd us, that we by our victorious faith shall overcome the world, as he has done for us; and that those that suffer with him here, shall reign with him hereafter.

2. Again, as to the *Corruptions* of flesh: what with innate concupiscence, and the inticements of the senses by vain objects from without, 'tis the *flesh* exposes us to all manner of temptations, making hourly inroads upon the Souls dominions, and standing out in rebellion against the Commands of Reason, and the Dictates of Conscience, who ought to be the Governors of humane actions.

Rom. 7. 23.

And further, as to *sins* themselves, though it be the consent of the Will makes them to be formally such, yet they have their rise generally from the *Flesh*, and their inlet into the Soul thorough it; and *the Law in the members* thwarts, and baffles *the Law of the mind*, and draws in the Will into its party, to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Now in this respect also Christ came, as to relieve Nature under her Infirmities, so to sanctifie and inable her against her Sins, by subduing lusts, and conquering temptations, and mortifying the deeds of the flesh, and destroying the works of the Devil.

1 Pet. 4. 1.

So then Christ out of his infinite kindness to us, took up our flesh in the worst sense, to suffer in the flesh (there's the *weakness* of it) for things done in the flesh (there's the *corruption*.)

And though Christ were in himself an innocent person, free from all sin, and so did not upon his own account deserve any ill usage; yet being reckon'd as a sinner in our stead, he was obliged, as our *Surety*, to be a Sufferer.

And this is the Reason, why weak and sinful *flesh* is named here in Christs assumption of humane nature.

But there is more still. *He was made flesh*; for a twofold further End or Design: for *Sacrifice*, and for *Food*.

Fl. 40. 6, 7.

1. To be a *Sacrifice*; and for this *flesh* was necessary. Thus he himself bespeaks the purpose of his coming in the Psalmist, *Burnt-offering and Sacrifice for sin thou wouldst not; Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy Will, O God. A body hast thou prepared for me.* Why a body? To put an end to all those Legal services and Levitical methods, which were not able to effect what they were intended for.

Alas! all those Rites and Ceremonies were but Types and Shadows of this one perfect Oblation, which Christ was to make, when he offer'd up himself on the Cross, to be a propitiation for sin, an atonement of wrath, and a final discharge to the Law; for the appeasing of Divine Justice, the sprinkling and quieting of guilty Conscience, and the pardoning and justifying of all truly penitent sinners.

For



For these Reasons he took *flesh*, that having his body torn with scourges, his precious side gored with the lance, his head pricked with thorns, and his sacred hands and feet bored thorough with nails, he might through all the out-lets of his flesh, all the veins and pores of his body, pay down the full ransom of our Souls : of which great payment the Infant *Jesus* laid down earnest on the eighth day after his Nativity, when he offer'd the first-fruits of his blood at his *Circumcision*.

2. Nor only so, but where the *Carkas* is, the Eagles will be gather'd also ; and as at all Sacrifices it was usual to have Feasts, Believers are to attend this Sacrifice, *to eat his flesh, and to drink his blood*. He designed this flesh of his for *Food*, as well as *Sacrifice*. And this in the holy *Communion*, instituted for a perpetual Commemoration of his death.

Mat. 24.28.

For as there was necessarily required for the satisfaction of Gods justice a *Propitiatory Sacrifice*, and that to be offer'd but once ; so for the support of our faith, the growth of grace, the expression of gratitude, and the renewing of our Covenant with God, it was necessary also, that this *Eucharistick Sacrifice*, the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving in the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, should be continued and frequently reiterated in the Church, as himself hath given order, till his second coming.

These are the *Reasons* of his being made *flesh*. The *Manner* how it was done is made out, by comparing the first *verse* of this *Chapter* with this 14th : There he said, *The Word was God* ; and here he says, *The Word was made flesh*. The same *Word*, as appears by the whole context, and this *Word* a distinct person from the Father, for *he was with God*, and here is called *the only begotten of the Father*, and was made *flesh*, which the Father was not ; and that this *Word* is all the way meant of *Christ*, the record of *John* the Baptist, which is brought in by the way makes good ; for he, when he gave witness, pointed to *Christ* in person.

*Christ* then was *God*, and that *in the beginning*, from all eternity ; and the same *Christ* *was made flesh*, what he was not in the beginning ; that must be in time. Being therefore *God* before his Incarnation, he did not cease to be *God* when he was incarnate ; since the essence and nature of *God* is immutable, so that he who is once *God* can never be otherwise. It remains then, that as the *Word* was at first a distinct person from *God*, and yet himself *God*, long before the Incarnation : so now since the Incarnation, that there are two distinct *Natures*, wherein his Person subsists ; the one *Divine*, which he had in the beginning ; the other *Humane*, which he assumed in time. I cannot see, what any perverse Disputant can object to elude so plain a Scripture, which doth so convincingly deliver the great Mysteries of Christian Religion, to wit, the *Divinity of Christ* the second Person in the Godhead, the *Union of the two Natures* in his one Person, and the *Distinction of Persons* in the Divine Essence : So then this great Mystery of the Incarnation was not brought about by changing one Nature into the other, or by mixing them together, but the two *Natures* remaining distinct in their substance and qualities, were united into one Person : which is made out in *Athanasius's Creed*, by a very apposite similitude : *For*, says he, *as the reasonable soul and flesh is one Man, so God and Man is one Christ*.

Yet this advantage our *Humane Nature* hath in this its Assumption and Union to the *Divine*, that whatsoever may be truly affirmed in strict sense of either Nature by it self, may truly and safely be applied to the whole person of *Christ*, *God-Man* : which *Divines* call the *Communication of Properties*.

To

*Sermon II.*  
Acts 10. 28.

To instance out of Scripture. The Church is said to have been purchased by the blood of God. Not that God as God, or Christ as to his Divinity hath either body or blood; but the same Person being both God and man: what Christ as man did or suffer'd, it may with truth be said God did and suffer'd.

Zach. 13. 7.

On the other hand in Zachary, God calls Christ *the man my fellow*. How doth this agree with the learned Father in his Confession? *Equal to the Father as touching his Godhead; and inferiour to the Father, touching his Manhood.* The ground of it is, that the same person who is man, is God also, and so equal to the Father.

John 5. 18.

And thus even the Man *Jesus* in his very Childhood was made the object of religious and divine Worship, without the least imputation of Idolatry, because he was God too; for otherwise that charge of blasphemy which the *Jews* charged upon Christ himself had been true, in making himself equal with God.

And yet these Properties of the two Natures, though thus communicated and ascribed to the Person, yet in themselves remain distinct in each Nature, and incommunicable. For we cannot say, as the *Papists* and *Lutherans* do, that the Humanity of Christ, his Body, his Flesh and Blood, is everywhere present, because his divine Nature is so; no more than we can say, that the Godhead in the suffering of the manhood, was put to death upon the Cross: so that their doctrine of *Ubiquity*, whereupon they ground the one their *Transubstantiation*, the other their *Consubstantiation*, has no foundation in nature, but is plain and perfect contradiction to it; the *Body* of Christ though glorified, being still a true Body, and so tyed to the Laws of all Bodies, which can neither be the same Bodies in several places at once, nor be several of them together in one place. And to fly to Omnipotence in such Arguments where the very ground is absurdity, is but to prevaricate, and to impose alike upon the Spirit of God in Scripture, and upon the Reason of mankind in nature; for though in Scripture Miracles must, and in nature they may be allowed; yet those things which imply flat contradiction, are utter impossibilities as well to the extraordinary power of God, as to the ordinary course of nature.

And thus we have passed over the *first* general head of our discourse; we shall now proceed to take a short Survey of the other heads, and then instead of Application, make some useful and devout reflexions upon them all together.

II. This Mystery of the *Word Incarnate*, was conceal'd and vail'd, during Christs earthly abode, under the meanness of his outward condition. *He dwelt or pitcht his Tent among us*: This expression alludes to the *Tabernacle*, wherein the Ark sojourn'd, and where the divine presence was wont in a special manner to shew it self. And we may gather from it these three *Remarks*.

1. That this state, wherein the Incarnate Word had lodg'd himself, was but mean.

2. It was but temporary; and yet

3. It was to be of some reasonable continuance for a competent time.

1. Our Saviours *outward condition*, whilest he conversed on earth in the disguise of our flesh, was but poor and mean. It was not a Palace, but a Tabernacle where he dwelt, covered with Goat-skins, and a rough outside: so that who looked upon the Word made flesh with a carnal eye, and could not by faith look beyond that veil, must needs take him for an considerable contemptible person.

And

Sermon II.

And this disappointment it was that scandaliz'd the whole Nation of the *Jews*, who look'd for a *Messias* with secular pomp and grandeur, and could not be perswaded, that one of poor Parentage, and mean Circumstances, could do their business, which was, they thought, to free them from the *Roman* yoke: but he professed *his Kingdom not to be of this world*, and it was their sins, their spiritual enemies, his generous quarrel was against. And to the accomplishment of those designs, he came about, he chose this mean condition as the most suitable.

John 18.36.

2. It was not Permanent or Lasting; but Temporary and Ambulatory. It was a Tent, not a House. The *Tabernacle* shifted often up and down, seldom staid long in a place, and at last, when the Temple was built, was quite pull'd down. And so *Christ*, though 'tis said he dwelt at *Nazareth*, and at *Capernaum*, yet indeed had no certain place of abode, not of his own where to lay his head, a Sojourner and Pilgrim, as those commonly are, who live in Tents; and though he call his body a Temple, yet was it but a Tabernacle till after his death, when the pegs and cords, the nerves and sinews, the veins and arteries, were first by cruel torture distended and stretched, and then with bloody wounds slackt and loosned, it was pull'd to pieces, and at three dayes end rais'd again into a glorious Temple.

Mat. 8.20.

3. However he did not make a bare slight Appearance, and so vanish and withdraw again presently; *he dwelt among us*: otherwise his *Incarnation* would have lookt like a phantom, not a reality. He continued and staid by it, and went through a course of life; and that partly for his own sake, partly for ours; that he might make a sufficient proof and a full evidence of himself to the world; that he might leave behind him to his followers a fair example of a holy and virtuous life, through all the stages and passages of it, and that he might fully accomplish the work he came about, ere he left the world: whereupon we find it said sometimes, that *his hour was not yet come*, when the malice of his enemies would by an untimely death have prevented his designs: and lastly, that he might to the conviction of men make out his divinity; for in this time that he dwelt among them, *they saw*, they could not but see *his glory*. That's the third considerable.

John 2.4.

III. The *Manifestation* of his Divinity. Though he were conceal'd in the flesh, yet he was at some times upon several occasions *manifested in the flesh* too; and as the *divine presence* was wont to shew it self in the *Tabernacle*, so his Godhead, through the mean circumstances of his outward condition broke out, and gave glimpses of its glory, what in his heavenly Discourses, what in the many Miracles he wrought, and what in other Instances from without him; as on this day, though lodg'd in a Manger, and seemingly entertain'd in a rude fashion, yet proclaim'd and welcom'd into the world by herald Angels, and a multitude of the heavenly Host; and own'd and ador'd by the innocent Shepherds, who beheld his glory in the fields, and admired his poverty in the Stable.

1 Tim. 2.16.

*We beheld*: here's Demonstration; and yet we that see it not, have the advantage of them that did, as himself told *Thomas*. The assurance of Faith being as much beyond the evidence of sense, as Faith is a principle above sense. In comparison of which, Sense is but delusion, and Reason it self but Sophistry.

John 20.29.

We may behold him then; he did not seek corners, but conversed openly: his very birth was at a solemn time; he went to be taxed, and as soon as born paid homage to a Heathen Magistrate. Nor was his appearance in our flesh more obscure, than it was illustrious; for here is

*His*



## Sermon II.

*His glory*, that is, his divinity; that which the *Hebrew* Masters call שְׁכִינָה the manifestation of divine presence. *Glory*, as 'tis apt to invite the Curiosity of beholders, so, if real, 'tis as able to convince their Judgment. And such was this. It was the glory

*As of the only begotten of the Father.* Such a glory, as could be no other then divine. Nor is the particle *as* here, any diminution in his Blazonry. It signifies *equality* as well as *quality*, *reality* and *truth* of things, no less than *similitude* and *resemblance*. It was such a *glory* then as was suitable to the eternal Son of God, such a glory as could not possibly appertain to any other.

Prov. 30. 4.

Dan. 3. 25.

Mar. 15. 39.

As for the *Son of God*, it was not only a Tradition among the pious *Jews*, as appears by that, *What is his name, or his Sons name, if thou canst tell?* But an Opinion got even among the *Heathens*. The *Assyrian* Monarch saw a fourth person with the three children in the Furnace, and could fancy him to be none but the Son of God. If we may believe a creditable Author, who says too, as I remember, that he had it from a *Jewish* Doctor of good repute, our Saviour was matriculated in the Temple-Rolls by publick order, *Jesus the Son of the Virgin Mary, and of the living God*; and the Captain who stood at the foot of the Cross, whil't he suffer'd, when he was in the meanest and most despicable condition, after he saw and heard what had past, as if he had been lifted a Soldier under Christs Banner, broke out into a ready confession of his faith, that of a truth *this Man was the Son of God*. And what other but *the only begotten Son* could it be, that came as he did

IV. *Full of grace and truth.* That's the last general, the Design and Advantage of the Incarnation. For Him, that the Godhead dwelling bodily in him, he might be fill'd with grace and truth. For Us, that that grace and truth might through him be derived to us. He was made so *full* in himself, that he might be running over to us; that we may receive of his fulness, *ver. 15.*

And this in opposition to the *Mosaical Law*, as 'tis set down, *ver. 16.* *The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* *Grace* opposed to the Moral Law, and *Truth* to the Ceremonial. *Grace* against the rigor and severity of the Moral Law, the Covenant of Works, which required an exact obedience, but afforded no *grace*, no strength for the performance, no pardon for any failure; and *Truth* anent the Rites and Ceremonies, the Types and Shadows of the Levitical Law, the Mosaical Pedagogy.

And herein the *glory* of the only begotten, out-shone all the glory of the Tabernacle, where the Law was kept, and which was wholly busied in Rites and Sacrifices that were but types of Christs one perfect oblation, and shadows of better things to come.

*Grace* in pardon of sins, and strength for duties; and *Truth* in doctrine, as to substance, as to clearness: as to purity of precepts, and as to richness of promises.

*Truth* for information of knowledge, *Grace* for conduct of life, and guidance of practice.

*Truth* to enlighten the Understanding, and *Grace* to incline the Will.

*Truth* in the Word, and *Grace* in the Sacraments; in Baptism, to take away original guilt, and in the holy Supper for the pardon of actual sins.

We shall close all with a short Meditation. Come along then, *Christian*, and let thee and I help one another in making the best use we can of what has been said; and to that end let us go over the whole back again, beginning with the last words.

Full

*Full of grace and truth.* Let us try our selves by this, whether we are concern'd in the business of the Text, in the story of the Day. Alas! what is Christs fulness to thee and me, if we have not received of his fulness? if his grace and truth be not in us, in some measure, what have we to do with the Incarnation of the Word, or the glory of the Only-begotten? Let us examine then, and call our selves to account, to try our spiritual state. Have we experimented these things in our selves? Have we embrac'd the *Truth* deliver'd to us in his Word? Have we accepted his *Grace* offer'd us by his Spirit in the Sacrament? Hath the power of *Truth* freed us from Errors? And hath the strength of his *Grace* in us subdued our Lusts? Is our Understanding inlightned by the *Truth*, and our Will inclined and guided by *Grace*? Doth *Truth* govern our Opinions, and are our Practices conducted by *Grace*? If so, this will indeed make out our interest in Christ, that he is in us, and we in him. Or do not we flatter our selves with idle pretences? Do we love *Truth* for *Truth*'s sake, and that we may grow in *Grace*? Is it not with us, as with Starvelings at Nurse, we suck wind-bags, hear much, and to little purpose; hundreds of Sermons in a year, and at years end it turns to no account: Or like rickety Children, swell our heads with notions, and having no grace in our hearts, dwindle in our limbs, in our actions? O let us so love the *Truth* in the Word, that we may grow thereby, and to the doctrine of Christ add the Seals of the Sacrament; which may confirm and improve us in *Grace*. And then when we are ascertain'd that our *Truth* is founded in *Grace*, and our *Grace* in *Truth*, let us bless God for the clear discovery of his *Truth*, and for the free conveyance of his *Grace* through Christ in Gospel-dispensation, and bless God in him, that we are deliver'd from the Covenant of Works, which we were not able to stand to, and from the bondage of weak and obscure Ceremonies.

Being thus prepar'd, let us then behold his glory, which outshone the service of the Tabernacle, and all the Legal Administration. Let us satisfy our selves in his Divinity and Sonship, and convince our selves of, and concern our selves in the clear and undeniable manifestations of it; and count his glory to be our advantage, and through faith in the *Only-begotten*, know that we are to be adopted in him sons by grace, as he was by nature.

And next let us wait upon him in his Tabernacle of flesh, and consider him in all the several instances and passages of his Humanity, view him in all the stages of his Life, in his Birth and Infancy, in his Actions and Sufferings, how he as Man acquitted himself, how he managed his great undertaking in profound humility, and unblameable innocence, that he might be meritorious for us, and exemplary to us. And are we as willing to follow his example by obedience, as to accept his merit by faith? And can we be content to leave all for his sake, and take up his Cross, and serve him in the meanest condition, if he see fit, as he served us?

Then further, we shall be fit to contemplate the great mystery of the *Word Incarnate*, and shall to our comfort understand the reasons and methods of divine love and condescension to us miserable sinners. Then may we truly rejoice in the History of this Festival, and triumph in the advancement of our nature by Christ, who has in his person united Humanity to Divinity, reconciled God and Man, and restor'd us to more than we lost in *Adam*, (who was made little lower than the Angels) by setting us far above them, being himself in his Manhood exalted far above all Principalities and Powers.

## Sermon II.

And then in the last place let us come to his Holy Table, to be confirmed and improved in his grace. Here the *Word* is truly Incarnate, and made *flesh*. Here we may not only behold his glory, but taste and see how gracious the Lord is. For though it be not a *carnal presence*; that's impossible to be, and as absurd to imagine: yet 'tis a real and *Sacramental presence*, Christ having put that virtue into his Ordinances, that they do truly exhibit and convey the spiritual grace, which they represent, and that for the pardoning of sins, for the sprinkling and quieting of Conscience, and for the assuring and final saving of our Souls. Which God of his mercy grant, &c. *Amen.*

Upon



UPON THE NATIVITY.  
THE THIRD SERMON.

*Preached at the Temple on Christmas-day,*

December 25. 1667.

Isa. IX. vi.

*Unto us a Child is Born, Unto us a Son is Given.*

The whole Verse runs thus :

*For unto us a Child is Born, unto us a Son is Given,  
and the Government shall be upon his Shoulder : and  
his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The  
Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince  
of Peace.*



HAT the *Evangelical Prophet* doth directly intend this and the following *Verse* of the Birth and Regal Office of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, whose *Nativity* we do according to the ancient custom of the Catholick Church this day celebrate, is agreed on by all both *Jewish* and *Christian* Commentators. The *Chaldee* Interpreter himself Paraphrasing that amiable Title of *Christ* in the close of this Verse, *The Prince of Peace*, in these very words, מְשִׁיחַ דְּשָׁלוֹם יֵסְדֵי בְיָוֶמָהּ that is, *The Messias, in whose days peace shall be multiplied upon us*, or in whose time we shall have abundance of Peace.

Whereupon, as *S. Matthew* has applied the beginning of the *Chapter* to *Christ's* dwelling in *Capernaum*, which is upon the Sea-coast in the Borders of *Zabulon* and *Nephthali* ; the Angel *Gabriel* makes the words of this and the *Verse* following, part of his Message to the Blessed Virgin, *Luk. 1. 32, 33.* Nay, further the Angel, which brought these good Tidings of great Joy to the Shepherds, as they watched their Flocks in the Field by night, tells them almost in the Language of the Prophet here. *For unto you is Born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, Luk. 2. 11.* which is the just Interpretation of what the Text tells us, *Unto us a Child is Born, unto us a Son is Given.*

I shall not spend time to shew the connexion and coherence of these words with the foregoing Verses, though that might afford us several useful Observations ; as That in times of *dimness, vexation, and grievous affliction*, in times of *battel and confused noise* and *garments rolled in blood*, and lastly in times of *burning and fewel of Fire*, *Verf. 5.* that is, in the mid't and thickest of temporal Judgments and Calamities, which can befall us, and of which we of this Nation have had fore experiences of late,

## Sermon III.

we may and ought to stay our selves upon *Christ*, and those Spiritual Mercies, which are by Faith derived unto us from him; it being the usual Method of the holy Prophets, and the Propriety of Sacred Style, to mingle sweet and comfortable Promises of *Christ* and Spiritual Blessings with the severest of their Threats and Denunciations, to bear up the Hearts of the Faithful in the worst of times, and under the saddest Dispensations.

Further, That 'tis not only lawful and expedient for us in such bad times, but our Duty too, to commemorate the great Instances of that Redemption and Salvation wrought and accomplished for us by *Christ*; viz. his *Conception*, *Nativity*, *Passion*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension*, and the Coming of the *Holy Ghost*; which were the several Scenes and Stages of that stupendous Work, and to solemnize this and other such *Festivals* with a serious Joy and Spiritual Exultation, that we may Rejoice before the Lord according to the Joy in Harvest, and as Men rejoice when they divide the Spoil, as 'tis exprest Verse the 3d. But I shall not, I say, insist on this.

Nor again shall I take up any of my time, in inquiring into the nature and extent and duration of the *Messias* his Government, or in explaining those illustrious Titles, with which he is adorn'd and set forth in the following words of this Verse; much less in doing what has been done so often to little purpose, in proving against the hard hearted *Jews*, that our *Christ* is the True *Messias*, in whom all their Prophecies are fulfilled; but shall confine my discourse to the Business of the Day, and speak of the Person and Birth of our Saviour, and his coming into the World, and the great Blessings which attended it. *Unto us a Child is Born, Unto us a Son is Given.*

*Christ's* Birth-day has been a day through all Ages so Solemn and Sacred, that *Justin Martyr*, a Father and Saint of the first Century, calls it *ἡ βασιλικὴ ἡμέρα*, the *Queen-day* in the Kalendar. We do not owe this Solemnity then to the Rubrick of the *Roman Church*.

This is the day which *Abraham* rejoiced to see, and he saw it, and was glad, *Joh. 8. 50.*

*Psal. 118. 24.*

*This is the Day which the Lord hath made*, made holy to himself in a peculiar manner; *We will rejoice and be glad in it.*

This is the Day of *Christ's* Power, in the Beauties of Holiness, when from the Womb of this morning, he had the dew of his Youth, or of his Birth, *Pf. 110. 2.*

*Luk. 2. 14.*

This Day was proclaimed by a Herald Angel, and welcomed with an Anthymn Sung by a whole Chorus of the Heavenly Host, praising God, and saying, *Glory be to God on High, and on Earth Peace, good Will towards Men.*

This, I say, was the Day, when the Angels desired *παρῶναι*, *1 Pet. 1. 12.* to stoop down and look into the dreadful Mysteries of our Religion, and to take a view of the King of Glory laid in a Manger, the Majesty of Heaven sitting in a Chair of State hudled together of Straw, made up of Fodder and Litter; to see the *Wonderfull* wonderfully Born of a pure Virgin; the *Counsellor* an Infant, and attended by dumb Beasts in a Stall; the *Everlasting Father* born a Child; the *Prince of Peace* crying for the Breast, and bound (as I may say) to the Peace in his Swadling-cloaths: In fine, the *Mighty God*, Creator of all things, himself Created, and made a weak Man, like unto us in every thing, Sin only excepted, *Hebr. 2. 17.*

And hereupon the Church has, to provide us with a due attention and besitting

befitting preparation for such abstruse Mysteries, and so miraculous a Mercy, as this *Day* brings us News of, allotted a whole Month, appointed four Sundays of *Advent*, in which time we may beg of God his Grace, as she hath exprest her self, *That we may cast away the Works of Darknes, and put upon us the Armour of Light, now in the time of this mortal Life, in the which his Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility.*

He then that cavils this and other like Festival-days, observed by us in compliance with the ancient and universal Practice of the Church, and censures them in their Institution as Superstitious, shews himself little better than Profane, and at once calls in question both his *Learning* and his *Devotion* to boot.

One thing, before I come to the *division* of the words, I cannot pass by without notice, that *Isaiah* uttered this Prophecy some hundred years before *Christ* was Born, and yet playing the *Historian*, rather than *Prophet*, speaketh of it as already come to pass; *A Child is Born*, not *shall be Born*; as one would think he should have said,

For this I shall not with flegmatick *Grammarians* say, 'tis a meer *Enallage*, the putting of one Tense for another; but shall offer two solid Reasons.

*First*, That in the Mirrour of Divine Understanding, the reflections from which enlightened the Prophets minds, with the knowledge of things which have been at any time heretofore, or which hereafter at any time shall be; there's no difference of time *past*, *present*, or to *come*; but all things there are entirely and compleatly all together *present*: That *Eternity* is not like our Finite Time, measured by the motions of the Heavens, and the succession of Minutes and Degrees; has not *prius* & *posterius* in it, one thing to happen before, and another thing to follow after; but is one everlasting *Now*, at one single view representing all things both *past* and *future*, as well as *present*. And hence 'tis that *Christ*, as he is here said to have been Born many years, some ages before he was Born; so he is called, *Rev. 12. 8. The Lamb which was slain from the Foundation of the World*; though the Passion of *Christ* happened not till some thousand years after the Creation. And this makes no mistake of Reckoning, no disorder of Accounts with God, with whom a *thousand years are but as a day*, as a minute, as nothing; to whom that which is *past* is still *present* and a doing, and that which is yet *future* and to be done in the fulness of its time, is already *present* and done.

2 Pet. 3. 3.

*Another* Reason is this, That such was the certainty of Things, and the assurance of the Prophets, in those Visions and Revelations God made to them, that the *Things* were as certainly to come to pass, and the *Prophets* were as sure they would, as if they had seen them done with their Eyes; particularly so clear a view had this Prophet *Isaiah* of *Christ*, and all the Passages of his life, and all that concerned him, that without injury to the *four holy Evangelists*, he may well be styl'd the *Fifth*.

To come now to the *Division*, which I shall make *two-fold*; the one more *Speculative*, touching the two Natures of *Christ*, and the Hypostatical Union of them into one Person; the other more *Practical*, shewing the great Blessings of this *Day*; the Benefits which redound thence to us, and our Duties about them.

In the former Division, we have,

First, the *Humanity* of *Christ*, *Parvulus natus est nobis*, Unto us a *Child Born*, that is, came into the World after the ordinary way of other Children.

Secondly,



## Sermon III.

Secondly, the *Divinity* of Christ. *Filius datus est nobis*, Unto us a Son is Given; a Son by Eternal Generation begotten by the Father before all Worlds, and in the fulness of time sent to take Flesh and become Man.

Of these two *Natures* I shall speak first *severally* and apart, then *jointly*, as they are both united into one *Person*; the *Child* and the *Son* here being but the same *Christ*, perfect God and perfect Man. God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the World, and Man of the substance of his Mother, born in the World, as S. Athanasius has with incomparable clearness taught us in his Creed; who though he be (as the same Father goes on) God and Man, yet he is not Two, but One Christ.

In the latter Division we have also two Parts.

First, The great Blessing of the Day, and that doubly exprest. The Birth of a *Child*.

The giving of a *Son*: and herein again we may observe.

1. The Subject or Matter of the Blessing, a *Child*, a *Son*.
2. The manner of its conveyance; *Born*, *Given*. *A Child is Born*, a *Son is Given*.

Secondly, Our *Interest* in it. *Unto us*, in our behalf all this, and to our benefit and advantage. *Unto us*, &c.

To begin with the former Division, I shall give you as brief and as plain an account, as I can, of the right Faith, concerning the *Person* of Christ, consisting of two *Natures*, as the Church out of Scripture and the Fathers hath defin'd it.

- I. And first as to his Humanity; *Unto us a Child is Born*, both words make it out; for his very being a *Child* proves him Man; so the Apostle argues, Heb. 2. 14. *Forasmuch then*, says he, *as the Children are partakers of Flesh and Blood*, he also himself likewise took part of the same. Again, in that he was *Born*, shews that he came into the World by the ordinary way, though after an extraordinary manner, as being born of a *Virgin* without Sin, that he might be a Lamb without spot fit for sacrifice.

He opened the Womb indeed as other first-borns do, but without prejudice to his Mothers Virginity, as the Sun transmits his Rays thorough the Window without hurting the Glass, having been to this end Conceived of the Holy Ghost, who overshadowing that Blessed Womb, separated and removed all rubbish of original corruption and taint from those Materials, out of which this Divine Structure was to be raised, from that Mass and portion of Flesh and Blood, out of which was to be formed the holy Child *Jesus*; insomuch that the Virgin was so impregnated by the virtue of the Highest, that without the assistance of Man, or so much as a carnal thought, this whole work was accomplished.

Yet was it not a Phantastick Body, which our Saviour wore, nor was he only the *Phantom* of a Man, as some Hereticks have been bold to give out, nor was this Mystery like the occasional Apparitions of *Angels*, who appeared like Men and were not Men, but had only adapted to themselves Bodies for a present use, which they were to lay off again when that Scene was over, as *Arrius* would have *Christ* taken for no other than an *Angel* in human shape, but he was perfect man, of a reasonable Soul and human Flesh subsisting.

Nor again was that Body fitted for him elsewhere, and then matri-  
culated

culated in the *Virgins* Womb, as if she had been only design'd for a Vessel to bear him for a time, and then convey him into the World; but he was made of and nourished with her purest Blood, being fashioned out of the very substance of his Mother, and partaking of her Flesh and Blood, as other Children do, as the Author to the *Hebrews* told us.

Being therefore formed and fashioned into Bodily Parts and Dimensions, and having all his Organs and Instruments of Sense and Motion, fitted for the exercise of the Faculties and Functions of a rational Soul, after nine Months confinement, he was brought forth and born with all the accomplishments of our nature, nay with all the defects and infirmities of it too, sin still excepted.

He hungred and thirsted, and was weary; He eat and drank, and was refreshed.

He had the same Passions and Affections as we have; He lov'd and hated, he joyc'd and griev'd, he was pleas'd and he was angry; and yet sinned not.

He conversed for the most part with Sinners, and was himself none.

He lived one while in the croud of People, other whiles he retired from company, and was alone.

He expos'd himself to dangers, and underwent hardships, and submitted to the meanest conditions of our Mortality.

He grew in stature as other Children do, and in Wisdom and Grace too, as most other Children do not; and having past his Infancy and Childhood in subjection, he arrived at Youth and Manhood, till at last having fulfilled his Course, when his hour was come, in his maturity and full ripeness, at three and thirty years of Age, and somewhat more; He did not only die like a *Man*, but for our sake died a cursed Death upon the Tree, like a *Wicked Man* also; was buried, and rested three days in the Grave.

And then raising himself by the Power of his Godhead from the dead, he re-assumed that very Body, which had lain in the Grave, and for the space of forty days more he conversed amongst his Disciples, and having given them Instructions, on *Ascension-day*, he went up with the self-same Body into Heaven, and there sits at the Right Hand of God, wearing still the Marks of those Wounds he received in his Hands, and Side, and Feet, as the Captain of our Salvation, and making intercession for us, as the Mediator of our Peace.

It may be asked, why, since the *Psalmist*, casting up the account of Man's Life pitches upon *Threescore years and ten*, as the just measure and scantling of our Mortality, *Psal. xc. 10.* why, I say, our Saviour contracted that span-length of time, not living half so long?

To this I shall make some few Answers.

1. That as the first *Adam*, was, as 'tis generally supposed, created in a full ripeness of Age, and vigor of Parts, and use of Reason (which was much about *Thirty*, at which time also the first Patriarcks married) and fell immediately upon his Creation; so the second *Adam* was about the same age to make satisfaction by his Death for the disobedience of the first.

2. That our Saviour, though in his person meek and innocent, and so qualified for that beatitude of *inheriting the Earth*, and living a long Life; yet having taken upon him our Sins, was reckoned as a *Malefactor*, and thus with the rebellious and disobedient, by the sentence of the Law, was to live out but half his days.

3. I shall add a *Third*, which I shall not obtrude upon your Belief, but

Mat. 5. 5.  
Mar. 15. 28.

## Sermon III.

Psal. xcii. 13.

but only offer as a conjecture of mine own, that Christ having sanctified our *Conception, Birth, Infancy, Childhood*, with the stages of our riper years and full *Manhood*, thought not fit to make any further progress, but leave *Old age* to it self, according to the improvements or debaucheries, the good or ill managery of its former time: it being not usual, that one that has been bred up in good Principles, and lived in virtuous Practices till that time, when he is become perfect Man, should fall off; but rather as a *Tree* planted in the Courts of the House of God, in his old age grows fat and flourishing, that is, from good grows better; and on the contrary, it being a miracle of mercy, if one that has lain so long soaking in an habitual practice and customary trade of committing known sins from his youth up, does then ever recover himself, but like *Fruit* rotted to the Core, from bad grows worse, till he become stark naught and desperate.

Having spoken thus much of Christs Human Nature, we come now to speak of the other, his Divine. *Unto us a Son is Given*: A Son, even the only begotten Son of the Father, he of whom God himself hath said, *Psal. 2. 7. Thou art my Son, this day I have begotten thee.* Light of of Light, very God of very God. Given by his Father, who so loved the World, that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believes in him, should not perish, but have life everlasting, *Joh. 3. 16.* No less than the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, God equal with the Father, descends from Heaven to put on our Flesh, and to cloath himself with the ~~men-~~ *human* Rags of our Nature.

*The Word was made Flesh*, and God was incarnate, and pitched the tent of his Tabernacle amongst us, *ἐσθνήωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν*; the word *שכינה* properly signifies the manifestation of *Divine Presence*, when the Lord appeared over the Mercy Seat, and in that allusion it follows, *and we behold his glory as of the only begotten Son of God*, *Joh. 1. 14.*

And this Divine Nature was made out and confirmed to the understandings and very senses of Men, partly by his *Doctrine*, partly by his *Miracles*. He spake as never Man spake, and did as never Man did.

Joh. v. 46.

Joh. xv. 24.

Luk. ii. 46.

He that should have heard him in the Temple disputing among the *Jewish* Doctors at twelve, instructing Multitudes upon the Mount with a full torrent of heavenly Discourse, amusing People with mysterious *Parables*, resolving the most difficult questions, and reproving the corruptions of the times with freedom and authority, must needs have read somewhat more than Man in Him; since all his discourses might have all serv'd for *Lectures* of his own Divinity.

Again, he that should have seen him cleansing *Lepers*, curing *Palsies*, giving sight to those that were born *blind*, making the *dumb* to speak, the *lame* to walk; healing all *diseases* with a touch, and casting out *Devils* onely with a word speaking, and would not have acknowledged him God as well as Man, would have had less Faith than the Devils themselves had, who openly confessed him to be the Son of God.

Nay, at his very lowest ebb, when he was lifted up upon the Cross, the *Centurion* was convinced of this truth by the Eclipse of the Sun, and the Rending of the Rocks (as who would not have been convinced by such testimonies, unless his Heart were harder than those *Rocks*, and his Reason under as prodigious an *Eclipse* as the Sun then was) and burst out into these words. *Truly this Man was the Son of God*, *Mar. xv. 39.*

Now



Now that the second Person should take upon him thus our Nature, not only *Scripture* clearly demonstrates, but even the *Philosophy* of the Heathens seems to intimate. Plato's Νῦς καὶ λόγος, the *Understanding* or *Mind*, and that which is the natural and immediate product of the Mind, the *Word* being nothing else but the *Father* and the *Son*, who was, (as the *Word* discovers the intentions of the *Mind*) to reveal and make known unto us Men the Will of his Heavenly Father, *Joh. xv. 15.* whereupon S. *John* in his Seraphick Divinity calls him in Plato's very Language, ὁ λόγος, the *Word*. In the beginning was the *Word*, and the *Word* was with God, and the *Word* was God, *Joh. i. 1.* and then the *Word* became *Flesh*, and dwelt amongst us, ver. 14.

Further Poetry it self has, out of the Prophecies concerning the *Messias*, furnished out their *Hermes* or *Mercury*, to be *Jove's* Agent here upon Earth, with a pennage to descend and ascend, and a *Caduceus* or *Heralds* Tipstaff, to be employed as a Messenger of Peace; to make terms of reconciliation betwixt the upper and the lower World, and a golden Wand to drive innocent Souls to *Elysium*, the place of Bliss.

Nor was their *Minerva*, the daughter of *Jupiter's* Brain, any other than the fiction and resemblance of this *Wisdom* of the Father, as Christ is often styled in the *Hebrew* Poetry of the *Psalms* and *Proverbs*.

Nor will the *Socinians* shift here serve turn, to disprove his *Deity*, that he was God only by Office, not by Nature, by Commission and Deputation made one, not by Generation begotten. For himself says, *I and my Father are one*, *Joh. 10. 30.* *Unum*, of one substance; and his Apostle says, *Phil. 2. 6.* Though he were in the shape and fashion of a Servant, yet he thought it no robbery to be equal with God; which would be downright Robbery and Sacrilege, were he a God only by courtesie, and made one, as they would have him to be.

Before I pass from this, I must answer one *Objection*, which the Context seems to make, it being one of his Titles in this very Verse, that his Name shall be called, *The Everlasting Father*: if a *Son*, then how is he the *Father* too? To which I shall apply this *Solution*.

That *Everlasting Father* is not to be taken here *Personally*, so as peculiarly to belong to the first Person of the Trinity, but as an *Essential* Title equally and alike appertaining to all or any of the Three; in as much as they all had a hand in the Creation of the World; for even of the second Person, the Son, his beloved Disciple tells us, that by him all things were made, and without him was nothing made that was made; and in this sense Christ, though the Son of God, is the *Everlasting Father* in respect of the Creatures, and thus in the *Lord's Prayer*, wherein we are taught to cry *Abba* Father, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, is address'd to the whole Trinity, and so to the second Person as well as to the First.

Joh. 1. 3.

Besides, there is a more intimate reason, that Christ being the onely means of bringing Souls to God and to eternal life (for no one comes to the Father but by him) should be called אבִי עֵד the Father of Eternity, and World to come, *Pater futuri seculi*, as the Vulgar renders it; and in this respect he himself says, Behold I and the Children, whom God hath given me, *Heb. 2. 13.*

Joh. 14. 6.

We have done with the two *Natures* severally, we proceed now to speak of their *Union*, by which they are hypostatically united into one Person; and first we will endeavor to shew *How* this was done, and secondly, *Why*?

## Sermon III.

And first as to the Manner of it, *How* it was done, 'tis unspeakable, 'tis unconceiveable. Nature can give no account of it, Reason is *non-plust*, and at a loss, and Eloquence it self is struck dumb, not knowing what to say; and yet though this Mystery be above the sphere of nature, and beyond the reach of Reason, it is not against the Laws of nature, nor doth it contradict the Rules of right reason, that the same person should be both *God* and *Man*. Our safest way will be to have recourse to the form of wholesom words, and to make use of that ancient Fathers explication still. He tells us then, that this was done,

I. Ἀπαρτισμός, *Not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh*: no; for that were utterly impossible; there would be an hundred contradictions in it. There was no Transubstantiation or real change of either Nature into the other.

How then? *By taking of the Manhood into God*. God the Son assumed the Body, which the Father by the operation of the Spirit had prepar'd for him; and the Humanity became the Shrine and Temple of the Deity. Being God from all eternity, he did not leave off to be God, when he was made Man, but was God still, and then Man too. The *Personality* continued all along the same, and it was still one and the same *Christ*; onely, as in Marriage the Husband and Wife become *one flesh*; so in this Assumption of our Nature, Divinity and Humanity make up one *Christ*. And these Espousals were made and completed in the Virgins womb, when he took upon him to deliver man, and did not abhor the Virgins womb, from whence this Sun of righteousness came forth, as a *Bridegroom* coming out of his *Bride-chamber*, *Psal. 19. 5.*

Gen. 2. 24.

2. Ἀμύχνησις, *Not by confusion of substance*. One nature was not changed into another; no, nor were they jumbled and mixt together, but remain'd distinct, and keep their natural Properties entire to themselves; so that for instance, though the *Deity* be infinite, and circumscribed with no bounds, the *Humanity* is not so, but is tyed to terms of Locality, and cannot be in several places at once; and therefore to maintain, what the *Romanists* do, that the very flesh of *Christ* is really present in every consecrated *Hof*, and to give *Ubiquity* to a Body, is so great an absurdity, that if there were nothing else amiss in that horchpotch Religion, that mass of corruptions, that alone were enough to turn the stomach of any rational ingenuous Person; suffice, unless a man will lay violent hands upon his own senses, assassinate his reason, and wilfully pluck out his eyes, and then with blind *Bayard* boldly affirm, the Sun does not shine, he can never give a free assent to such gross impositions.

But let's hear what the Father says farther; he tells us, 'tis by *unity of person*; and least any one should object, that this is begging of the question, he illustrates it with a pertinent and plain instance from our selves; For, says he, as the reasonable soul and flesh is one Man, so God and Man is one *Christ*. My body, and my soul, which are my essential Parts, though of themselves they be of quite different nature, and almost contrary qualities; the body material and extended according to its parts; the soul spiritual and impartible, whole in the whole body, and whole in every part; the one corruptible, the other immortal, &c. yet being conjoin'd, make me but one *suppositum*, one person subsisting in those two parts; so the *Godhead* and the *Manhood* being united, constitute but one Person, God and Man, *Christ Jesus*.

In the second place. The Reason and Intent of this Union, *Why*, upon what Necessity, and to what End the two Natures were thus to be united

united in one Person. And it was this: That *Christ* might be fitted for the office of Mediatorship betwixt God and Man, it was absolutely necessary, that he should partake of both Natures.

Had he been simply *God*, he could not have suffered for the sins of men; had he been merely *Man*, he could not have satisfied for them.

The *Divine* nature of it self was impassible, and the *Human* of it self impotent.

So then the Son of God by assuming our flesh, was qualified for death, and the other curses of the Law, which were due to us for our transgressions. That help him to bleed and to sweat, to feel the scourge and the nails, and at last to die.

And again, the flesh being thus assum'd, had from the excellency of the Person that assum'd it, an infinite merit and value put upon all its sufferings. Thus the Church was purchased with the Blood of God, *Act. 20. 28.* and therefore St. *Ambrose* tells us, *Christ* redeemed us with his precious blood, out of *1 Pet. 1. 19.*

To close all. He was *Man*, that he might die for our sins, and he was *God*, that having conquered death, he might rise again for our Justification.

Rom. 4. 25.

We have at last then brought all this home to our selves; all this was done for our sake. *Unto us this Child was Born, unto us this Son was Given.* And has God been at all this pains and cost for the Redemption of our Souls, and shall we slight him and them too?

II.

O let not us defeat this *Advent* of *Christ*, baffle his expectation, frustrate the design of his coming into the World, and ruin our selves for ever! For he that came at this time to visit us in great humility, will come again a second time with Majesty to judge us; and then how shall we escape, if we have neglected so great salvation?

Heb. 2. 3.

Let not us deceive our selves; for though this day bring us good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, and all the families of the World are concern'd in the birth of this Child, and he came to save sinners, and to recover that which was lost; yet this is not to be supposed without some qualifications on our side: We are to prepare for his coming, to give him a fit reception, least it be said of us, as it was of the Jews, *He came to his own, and his own received him not.* We must receive him then, if we mean to have any benefit by him, and that with Faith, with Repentance, and with Thanksgiving.

Luke 2. 10.

John 1. 11.

1. With Faith. We must by faith imbrace this Child, which was born, and lay hold on this Son which was given unto us. *Christ* must be born in us as well as he was born for us, that we may be flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone; and having our natures and persons sanctified by this mystical Union, we may grow up with him, till we become perfect men in him: and as he took up our nature, so we may be made partakers of his Divine Nature.

Eph. 4. 13.  
2 Pet. 1. 4.

2. With Repentance. The design of his coming was to destroy the works of the Devil, and to bless us in turning every one of us from our iniquities. As he suffer'd in the flesh for sins done in the flesh, so we must mortifie the flesh with the lusts thereof. None have a promise of pardon, but they that forsake their sins. We must part with our sins, if we mean to have the benefit of a Saviour. We must be like this Child, if we would enter into Heaven; and be regenerated and born anew, as newborn Babes in *Christ*, that we may be made the Sons of God, and Coheirs with him of glory.

1 John 3. 2.  
Acts 3. 26.

Prov. 28. 13.

Luke 18. 17.

1 Pet. 2. 2.



*Sermon III.*

3. With *Thankfulness* and Gratitude ; and that to be exprest in our *new obedience*; in our *joy* and chearfulness, and in our *charity*.

In our *new Obedience*, that as God has given us his Son, and in him all things, so we give up our selves to him with all that we have, and love him and serve him with all our strength. As we lay hold of Christ's *Merit* by *Faith*, so we must follow his *example* in our *obedience*.

Then in our spiritual *Joy* and cheerfulness in all conditions, providence shall cast us into. And this our joy must be in the Holy Ghost, not in excess and riot, not in revels and sports ; though hospitality and decent, nay, large provisions may be suitable to such solemn commemorations, as this is: and that particularly.

In the last place, upon the account of *Charity* ; that as God has been good and gracious to us, and respected us in our low estate, so we would be merciful and kind to one another in relieving the necessities of our poor brethren, whom God hath made his Receivers ; that as God has enriched us with spiritual blessings in Christ, so we would freely lay out our temporals in feeding the *hungry*, and cloathing the *naked*, and providing for the *sick*, and doing such other offices of Christianity, which Christ, when he comes the second time, will acknowledge, and bountifully repay, as done to himself.

Mat. 25. 45.

Now that you may with a sincere *faith*, and a serious *repentance*, and an ingenuous *gratitude* receive the great blessing of this *Day*, and carry it home along with you, God of his mercy grant through our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, Amen.

Upon

## UPON THE NATIVITY.

## THE FOURTH SERMON.

*Preached at Clarendon-House, before her Grace  
the Dutcheſs of Ormond. 1671.*

St Luke II. 14.

*Glory to God in the higheſt, and on earth Peace, good  
Will towards Men.*



His day of our blessed *Lord's Birth*, by one of the most ancient Fathers of the Christian Church, is styled the *Queen-day* of the Year, the most Solemn Festival in the whole Calendar. So early a Veneration it had even amongst the Primitive Christians.

What do I speak of *Christians*, seeing I may run up the account far higher? when the very Saints of the *Old Testament* themselves wanted not their share in this days Joys and Solemnities.

I will not affirm, that old *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, kept *Christmas*; but what our Saviour himself tells us, *John* 8. 56. intimates little less, where he says, *Your Father Abraham*, and my Father *Abraham* too, he might have said, *rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.*

And that day, which *Abraham* thus saw, and rejoiced to see, was, in all likelihood, no other then this day, on which the promised Seed was brought into the world by one of *Abraham's* daughters, the Blessed *Virgin-Mother*; for so she her self in her *Magnificat* acknowledges, that God had done it in remembrance of his mercy, *as he spake to our Father Abraham, and to his Seed for ever.* This day, I say, on which the Son of God was made manifest in the flesh to be the Son of Abraham, perfect God, and perfect Man; *God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the world; and Man of the substance of his Mother, born in the world;* as holy *Athanasius* has express'd it.

Luk. 1. 35.

And sure, if any, this is a day, *which the Lord hath made*; this is a day, I am sure, which hath made us; and it can be no offence to any truly pious Soul, to hear me go on with the Psalmist, and say, *Let us rejoice, as Abraham did, and be glad in it*; because we have such reason to rejoice, and to be glad for it.

Psal. 118. 24.

For certainly, if the *Resurrection* of Christ merited so far, as by the appointment and practice of the Church to have a weekly Commemoration, to be solemnized on the first day of every Week; then in all equity it must be granted, that his holy *Incarnation* and *Nativity*, when that great work of our Redemption was commenc'd and set on foot, which was at last completed and determin'd by his rising again, deserves at least a Yearly remembrance, to be an *Anniversary Feast.*

Especially

## Sermon IV.

Especially it behoves us, for whose sakes all this was done, (for so the Angel delivers his message, ver. 11. *Unto you, sayes he, is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* And he tells us in the 10<sup>th</sup> verse, that he brings good tydings of joy, which shall be unto all people. I say) it must needs very highly and nearly concern us, upon whom all the benefit of this dayes work doth totally redound; to fill our hearts with spiritual Joy, and our mouths with divine Praises; when we find in the verse before the Text, that the blessed Spirits above were so officiously concern'd in their Gratulations of Happiness to the lower world for the Birth of a Saviour.

For if a herald Angel came purposely to proclaim the day; if a glorious throng of the heavenly Host join'd with him in the Celebration of it; who yet were, as it may be thought, so far from being advantaged by it, that on the contrary it might seem a diminution to the *Angelic Orders*, to submit and own subjection, and do homage to an inferior nature of Man in the person of *Christ*; if they show'd this Joy, meerly in our behalf, and not out of any interest of their own in the *Saviour* that was this day born. For so the Apostle, *Hebr. 2. 16.* assures us, that *verily he took not on him the nature of Angels*; his Birth then and coming into the world, was not primarily design'd for any benefit to them; but he took on him the seed of Abraham; he espoused our nature and our quarrel at once: the Advantages of this his Assumption being to accrue to that Nature only, which was assumed; if this be so, as it appears to be, that the Angels were hardly any otherwise concern'd in this dayes business and joy, then in Charity and Kindness to us, unto whom this day was born a *Saviour*: then how much greater Motives have we from that Charity and Kindness we owe to our selves, to bless God in our own behalfs, to go with this multitude of the celestial Host, with the voice of joy and praise, with the multitude that kept holy-day, as the *Psalmist* has it, *Psal. 42. 4.* and to join in their Chorus, in singing their Carol with them, in praising God, and saying, *Glory to God in the highest*, that is, in the Heavens; and therein as God is concern'd, the heavenly Host is obliged by their piety: and on earth peace; peace below, and glory above; and to this their Charity engages them, as we are concern'd; for so we are in this, as it follows, *good will towards men*; this good will of God, being that, which contributes to his own glory upward, and maintains our peace downward, that which reconciles the upper and the lower World in a perfect friendship.

And so we are not onely by Piety and Charity obliged, as they were; but by Interest also, and our own Concern, to give God glory for that peace, and for this good will, upon which that peace was bottom'd.

*Glory to God*: There's God's end in the birth of our Saviour; and peace upon earth: That in respect of Men, the two Natures of God and Man being reconciled by the Union of them in one person: and then lastly is set down the Ground and Principle of the one and the other, the good will of God towards us men, whereby he hath so much increased the Revenue of his own glory on one hand, and procur'd and establish'd fair and firm terms of peace for us on the other.

*Glory to God* then for his Justice; glory to him for his Mercy; glory to him for his Wisdom; glory for his Goodness; and that in the highest, for the highest Atchievement, he has ever wrought; for the highest Favour, he has ever shewn.

*Glory to God* for the perfections of his Nature; glory to him for the declarations of his Will and good pleasure; which did all in the birth of  
Christ



*Christ* appear very glorious; and this *glory* to rebound from earth to the highest heavens, as it did at first descend from the highest heavens in the Blessings of *peace upon earth*. That's the next,

*And on earth peace.* *Peace* among all the Creatures of the earth; *peace* among all the Nations of the earth.

*Peace* amongst our selves with one another; *peace* within our selves; the *peace* of God, and the *peace* of Conscience.

*Peace* temporal, the security of all our other Injoyments; and *peace* spiritual, in the sense of Pardon and Acceptance; a freedom from guilt, and the bondage of the Law; a freedom consequently from wrath, and the displeasure of God.

In a word, *peace* internal, *peace* external, and *peace* eternal; such a *peace upon earth*, as has at present its Ratification, and will at last have its Determination in Heaven: as being grounded upon the *good will* of God towards men. That's a third part of the Gratulation.

*Good will towards men.* A Providential *good will*, and a Gracious *good will*.

*Good will towards men* in the work of Creation; *good will* towards them in the greater work of our Redemption; and *good will* towards us in our Sanctification.

*Good will* in the Design and Purpose, and *good will* in the Method and Manner of our Salvation.

*Good will* in accepting Christ for us, and *good will* in accepting us in him.

And not only so, *good will towards men*, that is, the good will of God; but also *good will among men*, *ἐν ἀνθρώποις*, that is, of men towards one another; and that in Imitation of Gods dealing with us, to his greater glory, and in Obedience to our Saviour, to secure that *peace* he purchas'd for us by his Death, and publish'd in his Doctrine; himself being the Prince of *peace*, his Gospel, the Gospel of *peace*, and his Spirit the Spirit of *peace*; which *peace* cannot be preserv'd without a mutual *good will* amongst men.

Iſa. 9. 6.

Rom. 10. 15.

Gal. 5. 22.

Such a *good will* among men, as to wish one another well, to do one another all manner of good offices; to be kindly affection'd with brotherly love; to be meek, and humble, and affable; particularly at such times as these, to use hospitality, to give chearfully, to relieve the needy, and to exercise all whatever acts of Charity; above all, to testify and sign this *good will* among our selves in the Holy Communion, the pledge and seal of that mystical Union, which is betwixt Christ and us, and ought to be betwixt us with one another.

You see then, that the whole Matter of our Discourse is reducible to these three Heads.

1. That the *Nativity* or Birth of *Christ* was a thing very glorious to God; it brought him *glory in the highest*; as being his highest Work, and his highest Favour.

2. That Christ's *Incarnation* was the Groundwork and Basis of our *peace*, and reconciliation with God, *peace upon earth*.

3. That Christ's being made Man for us, was the Design and Effect, and is a strong Argument and Evidence of God's great *good will towards men*; and then again, that this *good will* of God towards men in thus sending his Son, ought to be an argument to men to shew and express the like *good will* among themselves, especially at such times as this, when we commemorate that *good will* of God towards us in Christ.

And

## Sermon IV.

And these three Heads we shall run over with some brief and plain easie Meditations; giving you such hints, as you may improve further and enlarge upon, when you are by your selves in private.

- I. Come along then, *pious Soul*, and meditate with me upon the *glories* of this Day. For since there are *two* things generally, by which *glory* is acquired to any person, either the Character of his Natural abilities and Moral indowments, which are things residing *in him*, or the Greatness and Goodness of his Actions which flow *from him*; what a large Tribute of *glory* must of right be due to God, whose Nature and Will are adorn'd and set forth with so many Perfections and Excellencies, which in this Day's action were all of them most resplendent! What Returns of Praise and Thanksgiving doth he deserve from us, for this his Master-piece of Love and Beneficence to the children of Men!

And if Men are so highly commended for being Just and Kind, for being Wise and Good, for effecting great Enterprizes, and doing publick Benefactions, what a vast Renown belongs to God, who is infinitely such, and has shewn himself so to the astonishment of reason, in the *Incarnation* of his Son, and in that has brought a mighty thing to pass, and blest us with all manner of blessings in him?

See *first*, how highly all his Attributes have been exalted in this one Instance of *Christs birth*; and to name no more of them now, behold the Triumphs of divine *Goodness* and *Wisdom*, *Justice* and *Mercy* both in the Humanity of his Son!

O *gracious God*! what an unspeakable *Goodness* of thine was it, when the whole mass of Mankind was, through their own miscarriage, engag'd into everlasting ruines, plunged in Sin, and immerst in Misery, without any hope of ever recovering, had we been left to our selves; that thou shouldst then after Sentence executed, and Penalty inflicted, repent of the Evil which we had brought upon our selves, and which we our selves can hardly be brought to repent of: so as to take the matter again into debate, and turn over a new leaf of kindness, and in tender compassion of our perishing condition, to set thy heart upon us to do us good; and to effect that, when nothing else would serve turn, shouldst be willing to part with thy own Son, out of the bosom of thy love, to be used severely for our sakes, and to empty him of his glory, that in the livery of our flesh, and in the form of a servant, he might submit himself to those Hardships and Indignities, which were our due.

Psal. 8. 4.

*What was man, that thou shouldst be thus mindful of him, as to seem forgetful of thy self, and thy own honor? or the Son of man, that thou shouldst so far regard him, as to undervalue the Son of God upon his account?*

What am I, *good God*, or the best of men living, that thou shouldst think of any Saviour at all for me; much less that thou shouldst provide me such a Saviour?

O how hard is thy heart, *my Soul*, if thou wilt not be obliged, if thou canst not be won by this excess of goodness!

O the admirable *Wisdom* of God in the Contrivance, and Managery of our design'd Salvation! when in the prospect of all generations to come, there was not any one met with in divine Prescience, not the holiest *Priest* or *Prophet*, not the wisest or greatest *King*, that could be pitch'd upon fit for this Undertaking, so that as to any thing of meer Man, our Case grew desperate, and was to be let alone for ever; when had all

Mankind

Mankind been to answer the Engagement, they must of necessity have sunk and lay'n under the weight to all eternity; no finite Creature being able to make an infinite Satisfaction; when all other Propositions fail'd, there being no Creature in the World, no Device in Nature, that could promise us assistance; that then God should set his Wisdom to work, to find out a suitable Expedient, that by uniting the two Natures in one Person, God and Man might be reconciled, through the mediation of One, who should be both God and Man himself: What a mystery of divine Wisdom was this?

Again, in the Carriage of it, what a Labyrinth and Maze of secret Plots and interwoven Providences all along from the *Cratch* to the *Cross*, to preserve him for the Triumphs of his *Passion*? How was he concealed from the *Malicious*, under the disguise of a mean Condition, to the end that their malice might pursue its design, and at last have its effect; and yet in the mean time own'd and pointed out by Heaven to the *Pious*, that his coming might not lose its intended Benefit.

*Nadle*

Here how Obscure his Birth, yet how Illustrious? What more obscure than *Shepherds*? what more illustrious than *Angels*? The wakeful Swains at midnight receive those *tydings of joy*, which the drowsie world was not worthy of? And indeed what fitter Attendants for him, who was the *Lamb of God*, and was to be the *great Shepherd*, then men of that innocent Profession and Employ?

Observe a little the tracks of Wisdom in some other circumstances.

He was to be *born of a Woman*, because he was to be *made under the Law*; and yet this Woman to be a Virgin, that his Conception and Birth might be without sin.

An ordinary Woman would not have served for an extraordinary Birth, and yet this Virgin too to be espoused, for the honour of both Estates, that she might be provided with a Guardian, and secured from publick censure; and, as one of the Fathers guesses it, that the Devil might not know where to look for the *Messias*, who knew by the Prophet, that he was to be born of a Virgin, but would not imagine that Virgin to be a Wife; whose malice, had he known, would have been very industrious to have stifled our Salvation in its Womb.

To be born in a *Stable*, and laid in a *Manger*, what more Ignoble? and yet what more proper for him that was long since design'd for Sacrifice, then to have his first entertainment and converse amongst Cattle?

How strangely has the Wisdom of God quite throughout discover'd it self in all these Concealments of his Son.

Next consider the strife that was betwixt the *Justice* of God and his *Mercy*, and how happily it was compos'd; the one urging the punishment due to mans Sin, the other interceding for his Pardon, and yet both satisfied, both obtain'd their purpose, and came off with honour.

Thus necessary it was in order to our reconciliation to God, that we might have *peace* upon Earth, that there should be peace in Heaven first, and that the divine Attributes should be reconciled to one another. And that was done this day, when *Mercy and Truth met together, and Righteousness and Peace kissed and embraced each the other*: and as it follows, *Truth sprung out of the earth, out of the Virgins womb*; and *Righteousness* that is, divine Justice, *look'd down from Heaven*, with content and satisfaction.

Psal. 85. 10.



## Sermon IV.

O *my Soul*, give God the glories of his Justice and Mercy in the highest, and then he will not grudge thee thy peace upon earth, and good will to boot.

For was it not great glory to his Justice, to have the rigour of her demands, to be paid the utmost farthing of our debt; of which payment she had a sufficient gage this day in the birth of our Surety?

And was it less glory to his Mercy, to depute his only begotten Son in our room and stead, that what we were not able to do for our selves, he might undertake for us: and to this end to cloath him with our nature, that in that nature, which had committed the offence, satisfaction might be made; which was the thing that Justice insisted upon; and that Christ, as *Man*, might suffer for the sins of men; and as *God*, might satisfy God's Justice for them.

Hearken, *my Soul*, what the Lord will say, and he will speak peace concerning thee; yet so, that thou may'st not return to folly.

See here the Articles and Agreement of thy Peace, in thy Saviours Humanity and Birth!

What greater Satisfaction could Justice require? what more precious Pledge could Mercy propound, then that the Son of God being made the Son of Man, should take the Sin of Man, as well as his Nature, upon him?

Let some bold Wits argue as they will, that it was not agreeable to the rules of Justice, that an Innocent person should be punished and ill handled, that the Nocent may escape; it was highly agreeable to Mercy, it should be so, since it was impossible Man could have come off any other way; and it was also strictly just, that the Surety should become Principal, and answer the debt, and that his payment should acquit the debtor.

Be of good cheer then, *my Soul*, thy sins are forgiven thee. The Son of God this day enter'd into Bond in thy behalf, and by taking up thy nature engag'd at once to satisfy Justice, and to procure Mercy for thee. See here Justice at the highest, and Mercy at the highest; and therefore give glory to God in the highest.

Consider further the Greatness and Goodness of this stupendous Work, and take all its dimensions, its Height and its Depth, its Length and its Breadth; and lose thy self in thy meditations, that thou may'st find thy self in Christ.

Never was there, never will there be any thing done by God, in honour to himself, or in love to man, at this high glorious rate, as the sending of his Son thus into the world.

The *Six dayes* work, when he made all things out of nothing, was no way comparable to the *Nine moneths* travail of his wisdom for the birth of Christ.

All the Miracles of the *Old Testament*, all of the *New*, come far short of this stupendous Work.

How canst thou conceive, *my Soul*, how thy Saviour was conceiv'd in the Womb, how God was made Man, the Eternal and the Infinite contracted into the measures and scantlings of Time and Place? In what language art thou able to deliver, how a Virgin should be deliver'd? how wilt thou express after what manner the Word became an Infant; and what Oratory wilt thou use, to set forth the King of glory inthron'd in a Manger?

These things, I confess, if mans Reason be consulted, seem incredible, at least hard to be believ'd; but if thou consider the Almighty Love of God, to whom nothing is impossible, all these Mysteries are easie and plain.

For

For this transaction of *God Incarnate* is as full of the Instances of Love as of Wonder, as Kind as 'twas Great, and no less considerable in its Obligation than in its Contrivance, as having an auspicious and beneficial Influence upon all the sons and daughters of men.

Sermon IV.

What greater kindness either for Honour or Advantage could God have bestowed on us, then by cloathing his own Son with our flesh at once to dignifie and to sanctifie our Nature, and withal to magnifie his own Love to the children of men, by making his own Son one of the number, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone.

O my Soul, admire God for the greatness, love him for the kindness of his dealings with thee this day, and with prostrate humility and a devout love wait upon him in the Stable, where he was installed the Prince of thy Peace, and having no place in the Inn, make him room in thy Heart, where he may lay his head; and amongst the Cattle, which were this morning surpriz'd with the glories of his Birth, do thou like the Ox, know thy owner, thy dear Redeemer, and with the Ass address thy self to thy Masters Crib, and be not like *Israel*, that doth not consider, but with *Mary* keep all these things, and ponder them in thy heart.

Give glory to God in the highest, that's all he looks for at thy hands, and then thou shalt find peace upon earth, which is all thou needest look after at his. That's the second head of our Meditations, and that peace accompanied with good will too, which is the third and last, in both which we can be but very short.

And now my Soul, having past over the Wonders of the Day, apply thy considerations to the Benefits and Advantages which attend it, and next to the Glories which belong to God, meditate on those Joys and Blessings, which it hath made thee partaker of. Glory to God on high, and on earth peace to thee.

Consider, how *Christ*, that was both the *Lion* and the *Lamb*, has by his coming into the World reconciled the antipathies of all the Creatures, and made all the World at peace with thee, if not in a literal, yet in a spiritual sense, by his Doctrine and Example, teaching us to subdue all animosities and disorderly passions, and bringing into the World an Evangelical temper of meekness, patience, peaceableness, long suffering, kindness, love.

Consider, that in that Age of the World, when he was born, there was an universal calm, when *Janus* his iron gate had been twice by publick order shut, and the *Roman* Eagles, like *Noah's* Doves, had planted the Olive-branches of peace all over the World, that people might be at leisure for the entertainment and welcom of their new-born Saviour.

Look about thee, above thee, before thee, without thee, within thee, all is Peace, if thou thy self wilt accept the terms of peace, which are offered thee.

Study to understand the peace of God, which passes all understanding, and rest thy self satisfied in the peace of thy own Conscience, through the pardon of thy Sins. O seek this Peace and ensue it; lay hold on it by Faith, having su'd out thy pardon by Repentance, and keep it by a strict Obedience. Phil. 4. 7.

Christ has destroyed the enmity of the Law contained in Ordinances, and has reconciled us to God; so that now, if thou be'st not thy own enemy, thou need'st not fear the Sentence of the Law, nor the Wrath of God.

Above all, provide for peace at the last, that thy latter end may be peace, and

*Sermon IV.*

and then the God of peace will receive thee into everlasting peace.

And then in the last place sweeten and heighten these thoughts of *Peace* with the contemplation of God's *good will* towards thee, upon which thy peace was founded; his *good will* lockt up in his Decrees, and his *good will* manifested in his Performances.

His *good will* in Making thee what thou art, and Preserving thee, and Providing for thee, and his *good will* in Redeeming and Accepting thee in the well-beloved.

O dwell upon this thought, that God from his Soul wishes thee well, and would do thee all manner of good, if thou wilt be but good, as he would have thee, and be so kind to thy self, as to make good use of his kindness.

And then, *lastly* from this *good will* of God towards Men, learn thou also to have the same *good will* for thy fellow-men, in all gentleness and loving kindness, to all that any way stand in need of the assistances of thy charity, giving and forgiving, even as God hath given his only Son, and in him all things to thee and for thee, and has for his sake forgiven thee, that so thou may'st by this Love of God, which his Spirit hath shed abroad in thy heart, and inabled thee to exprest to others, evidence to thy self his love and good will towards thee, and in a full acquiescence in that his *good will* may'st bring home *peace* to thy Conscience.

In a more especial manner testifie and seal this *good will* of thine, when thou bringest thy Gift to the Altar, and then there thou may'st *with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, laud and magnifie his glorious Name, praising him, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and Earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most High.*

Upon



## UPON THE PASSION.

*A Sermon preached at S. Martins in the Fields, on  
GOOD-FRIDAY, 1668.*

St Joh. XIX. 5.

--- Behold the Man.



THE Words, I have made choice of, were *Pilate's*; the *Occasion*, his presenting *Christ*, after he had scourg'd him, with his *Crown of Thorns* on his head, and his *Purple Robe*, to the view of the people. So the whole Verse runs, *Then came Jesus forth, wearing the Crown of Thorns, and the Purple Robe; and Pilate saith unto them, Behold the Man.*

And indeed I am forc'd, both by other circumstances, and by this very expression here used, to be so charitable to this unjust Judge and cowardly Governor, as to think he might possibly design the presentment of so sad a spectacle, on purpose, to take off the edge of his Adversaries Malice, and to move the enraged Multitude, if it might be, into some relenting pity. This being a Roman form of speech, us'd upon such occasions, to commiserate any person in great distress; *Behold the Man*. To give one Instance for all out of a \* *Classick* Author, where one seeing a Carcass floating upon the water, and driving to the shore, cries out, *En homo! O sad sight! Behold the Man! Quemadmodum natat!* How he swims along.

\* *Petron. Arbiter.*

The *Man* here expos'd to View, swimming through a Sea of his own Blood, in the common Wrack of Mankind, was *Jesus Christ*, God and Man; but now *ψιλὸς ἄνθρωπος*, bare man indeed, to outward appearance, when God had in a manner disown'd and deserted him, and left him poor man to his helpless self, and to the will of his implacable and prevailing Enemies.

Now though these words seem particularly directed to one passage of his Sufferings, as I noted before, yet I think, I shall offer no violence to the meaning of them, if I consider *Christ* here in the full Complexion of his Grievs, and represent him in all the Lineaments of his Sorrows, that so our Affections may all meet with something to fasten upon, and the History of the Passion may take up and employ all our Passions.

*Behold the Man* then, and Admire him in what he Is, and in what he Suffers; and let the Mercies of God to us sinful men, and the Cruelties of wicked Men to the Incarnate God fix our Attention close, and drive our Concernments home, that the consideration of the Excellencies of the person suffering, and of the Indignities he met with may move our  
Pity

*Pity* towards him, and raise in us a holy *Anger* against his malicious Persecutors; and above all, when we have inquir'd into the contrivances of this bloody Plot, we may *Hate* our sins, that were the Causes of his Death, with a perfect hatred; and cast ourselves into an extremity of *Grief*, that we may every one of us be (as he was) a *Man of Sorrows*; and with tender apprehensions, may *Fear* the severity of Gods *Justice* for sin, who spared not his own Son; and yet being assured of Gods *Mercy* to us in this Son of his, we may entertain *Hope*, and improve that hope into *Joy* and gratulation for the *Pardon* of our sins, and Christs *Triumph* on the *Cross*; and that, having through Him overcome the World, we may with *Meekness* and *Patience*, as he did, run the race whatever it is, that is set before us. Lastly, that we may stretch out the hand of *Faith* to lay hold on him, and to apply his *Merits*, and may imbrace him with the Arms of our dearest *Loves*, and become One with him. That so having thus imploy'd all the *Faculties* and *Passions* of our Souls in the contemplation of his *Passion*, we may, when we go to the Blessed *Sacrament*, (as every one, that owns himself a *Christian*, does sure at this time of the year at least intend to do) by practical application eat his *Flesh* and drink his *Bloud*, and be made effectually partakers of the great benefits of his Death.

Isa. 53. 3.

Heb. 12. 1.

First then, *Behold the Man*, with *Wonder* and *Admiration*. God calls it his *Strange Work*, when he punishes any of us: but these *Inflitions* upon his own Son, this *Passion* of *Christ* is a Theme to puzzle *Men* and *Angels*, and to confound them with amazement. *Discourse* and *Intuition* both are here at a loss. Those blessed *Spirits* could not find out the meaning of this *Mystery* in the *Mirror* of the Divine Intellect, but were fain, *παρὰ φύσιν*, to stoop down, and see what was a doing here upon earth amongst men.

1 Pet. 1. 12.

And when we further consider, how the righteous *Providences* of God were interwoven with the malicious and unjust *Practices* of men, to bring this great Design strangely about; how he was *betray'd* on one hand, and *deliver'd* on the other, how he laid down his life voluntarily, and yet was with cruel violence put to death, heightens our *Admiration* to the perfect confusion of our *Understanding*.

Not only the *Spectators*, but even the *Theater* it self, was concern'd in this *Tragedy*, and the *lights* and *scenes* acted their parts in the surprize and astonishment of Nature. The whole *World* stood agast, and the *Earth* shoke with horror, and was struck into a cold sweat at the apprehension. The *Heavens* put on sable and were close Mourners all the while. The *Sun* with greater miracle, then in *Joshua's* time, or on *Abaz* dyal, was totally darkn'd, and that in the Opposition of the two great Luminaries, and kept in at High-noon, when the *Sun of Righteousness* was getting up to the *Meridian* of his Sufferings: insomuch that some wise Observers of nature at that time concluded, that either the whole *System* and Frame of things was now falling to pieces, or that God himself, the *Lord of Nature*, was in some great distress; and so he was indeed.

For behold here the *King of Glory* put to open shame, the *Wisdom* of the *Father* mocked and set at nought, the eternal *Word* silenced, *Omni-potence* disabled, *Omni-science* baffled, essential *Truth* born down, *Divinity* deposed, *Eternity* a dying, and in short, the ever blessed *God*, the *Lord of Life* basely murdered, by the wicked hands of Those, whom he came out of the greatest *Charity* to save,

Act. 3. 15.  
Act. 2. 23.

Yet

Yet though these Mysteries pass our quickest *Understanding*, they require our closest *Attention*, and deserve our deepest *Study*, as being of our nearest *Concernment*.

If a *Romantick Story* made up with poetical language and impertinent fictions can entertain us with that concerned *Affection*, that we are impatient and unsatisfied, till we have discovered the whole *Plot*, and traced all the turnings and windings of it to the very Close and Issue of all the fabulous *Adventures*: what a shame were it for us *Christians*, not to be very well vers'd in all the passages of our *Saviours* sufferings? since we are so concern'd in them, that upon the benefit of them depends our eternal welfare.

Let us then join our selves to the pious and sorrowful Women that look on, lay aside all other thoughts the while, bend our mind wholly to this sad spectacle, and attend the progress of his *Sufferings*. Let us nail our *Meditations* to the *Cross*, and resolve to know nothing but *Christ*, and him *crucified*, this *Day*, this *Hour* at least, and set *Jesus Christ* forth before our eyes with as much evidence as we can; and in fine, improve all our *Observations* of him, by calling in our *Affections*, to help the weakness of our *Understandings*. Let our eyes dwell concernedly upon this doleful Object, and in the *first* place from his *Innocence* and barbarous *Usage* learn *Compassion*.

Gal. 3. 1.

Behold the *Man* then, and *Pity* him with *Shame* to boot; for canst thou, *Christian Soul*, choose but cover thy face with *Scarlet-blushes*, when thou seest *Christ* thy great Friend in that mockery of his *Purple Robe*? Canst thou with dry eyes, without any *tears* in them behold the *Blood* starting out his *Temples*, and round his *Head* issuing out at every *Thorn-hole*, and trickling down, like the consecrating *Oyl* upon *Aaron's* head, to the skirts of his *Garment*? If thou want'st a *Hand* to *rescue* him, thou canst not want a *Heart* sure to *pity* him.

Psal. 133. 2.

But let us step back into the *Story*. Behold how he is *surprized* and seized on at first by *craft* and *treachery*! How he, as our *Surety*, is arrested at our action, hurried and drag'd along by violent hands! How his blessed *Meditations*, and *Soliloquies* are interrupted in the dead and still of night! And shall not we be concern'd in this sad Contrast?

See, how that lovely Face of His is spit upon, buffeted, and contumeliously used? those *Doves eyes* sealed and blindfolded! And shall we go hood-wink ours too?

See, how he is thrust and pull'd from *pillar* to *post*, scourg'd first, and then *crucified*! And shall we look upon all these direful passages unconcern'd?

Can we see those *furrows* plow'd on his *Back*, and largely water'd with his own *Blood*, and not go forth and Weep, bearing our precious *Seed*?

Psal. 139. 3.

Psal. 126. 6.

Can we stand by and see the rude *Soldier* aiming and running a tilt at his *Heart*, and not have our own hearts pierced at the sight?

Brute and dumb *Nature* her self bore a share in *Christ's Agonies*, had her pangs and throws for her dying *Lord*: Her bowels mov'd and earn'd with *Earth-quakes*, and rending of *Rock*s. Are our *Hearts* harder than those *Rock*s, that they will not break too, to give vent to so just a grief?

Mat. 27. 54.

Are they more *dead*, than those *Repositories* of the *Dead*, which open'd to give Him way, when he was to come into the lower parts of the *Earth*?

Mat. 27. 52.



Rom. 8. 22.

Earth; and cannot the *Ephphatha* of his expiring Ghost open them?  
When the whole Creation *εὐσεβάσει*, *echoes back* our dying Saviours  
Groans for the redemption of the Children of God; Have we never a  
groan to fetch?

Mar. 15. 23.

Are none of our *Heart-strings* in *Unison* with his, that are now breaking  
for our sake, to move at distance in Sympathy at the stroke of the  
*spear*?

Ezek. 16. 6.

Have we drunk that *οἶνον ἐσσυμμισμένον*, the *Wine mingled with Myrrh*,  
which was prepared for him, to stupifie our senses, and to make us past  
feeling of our Saviours dying Pains?

Tit. 3. 5.

He pitied us weltring in the *Blood* of our impure *Nativity*; O let us  
pity him reaking in the *Blood* of his *Passion*! He took us up in our ori-  
ginal filth, and washed us in the *laver of Regeneration*; O let us bathe his  
mangled and clotted body in our compassionate *Tears*!

I should call that Subjects *Loyalty* in question, that should not by out-  
ward demonstrations manifest great resentments and an utter abhorrence at  
the reading or hearing that horrid *Trial* and *Murder* of our late Gracious  
Sovereign and Royal *Martyr* CHARLES the I. who would (had he  
liv'd *before Christ*) have been an excellent *Type*; but *since Christ* is the  
nearest and fairest *Copy* of his sufferings. And surely that *Christian* has  
but a cold and indifferent kindness for his *Religion*, who is not strangely  
affected with the History of *Christ's Passion*.

Rom. 6. 5.

The *Legend* tells us of S. *Francis*, a Founder of one of their *Orders*,  
that by the assiduous and devout meditation of *Christ's Passion*, he had  
the favour to have the very prints and stamps of the *Nails* ingraven on  
his hands. Let us all be so far of that *Order*, as to transcribe the *Wounds*  
of our *Saviour*, and rivet those sacred *Nails* into our love-wounded  
hearts. This is the way to be *planted with him into the likeness of his death*,  
to make his sufferings our own, and to imprint them upon our hearts by  
*compassion*.

Having thus with *Pity* beheld the Man, now methinks out of that pity  
to our suffering Lord, I see an holy *Indignation* rise up in your breasts  
against the direful Contrivers of his sufferings.

And it may be, you are ready to expostulate

With *Pilate* the Judge, that pronounced him *Innocent*, and yet basely  
and contrary to his own Convictions *scourg'd* him and deliver'd him to be  
*Crucified*;

With the blind *Priests*, who should have been *Seers*, themselves by their  
malice and envy more *hood-winkt*, then they had made *Christ*; who  
could not in the Innocence of his *Life*, in the Purity of his *Doctrine*, and  
in the Greatness of his *Miracles* plainly perceive his Divinity.

And to cry out,

O envious and malicious *Pharisees*!

O cruel and bloody *Elders*!

O credulous and giddy *Multitude*!

O unworthy *Villains*, that laid hands on him!

Perjured *Villains*, that falsely accused him!

O barbarous and no longer *Roman Soldiers*!

O butcherous *Tyrants*, that nailed him to the *Cross*!

O Devil of a Man, that goredst his precious *Side*, and couldst find in  
thy hard heart to wound his tender One!

O perfidious *Traitor Judas*! and hellish *Satan*, that putst it into his  
heart, and setst all the rest on work, to *Destroy* Him, that came to save the  
World!

But

But alas! all this *Expostulation* would be ill-spent and mis-applied; let every one of us expostulate with himself, and say, *Thou, thou, my Soul*, wast thy Saviours *Traitor*, his *Accuser*, his *Condemner*, his *Executioner*: Nor *Man*, nor *Devil* could have done him the least hurt, or so much as toucht a hair of his head, had not *Thy Sins* made him liable.

Let us come nearer then, and behold the *Man* with sorrow and destitution of our own guilt. O see, how the *Wounds* at our approach bleed afresh! We are guilty of this Murder. *Judas* and the *Jews* were but the *Accessaries*; we are the *Principals*.

We were the *Judas*, that under the pretence of friendship betray'd our *Master*, that come near *Christ* with our lips, but in our hearts are far from him; that own him in a bare formal *Profession*, but deny him in our *Practice*.

Mat. 15. 8.

Our *Sins* are those *Jews*, which cried, *Away with him, let him be crucified*.

Joh. 19. 15.

Let us therefore turn our justly conceived *Anger*, and spend it upon our selves.

If *Judas* his melancholy Reflections, upon what he had done in betraying innocent Blood, *choaked* him, made him swell and burst with grief, and die in an unpitied repentance; what *proper place*? what place of our own must we *Apostate Christians* expect to go to, of whom *Judas* was but the type?

\* ἡ πηγή αὐτοῦ.  
Mat. 27. 5.  
Act. 1. 25.

If the *Jewish Nation* was devoted to a *παραδόξις*, to a final excision, for putting to death ignorantly the Lord of Life; (for so our Saviour himself acknowledges upon the Cross, *Father, forgive them, says he, for they know not what they do*;) what fatality of destruction will attend us *prophane Professors* and *miscreant Believers*, who yet prefer every *Barabbas-Interest* or *Lust* before *Christ*, who trample upon the *Blond of the Covenant*, making it a common thing, and despise so great Salvation?

Luk. 23. 34.

Heb. 10. 29.

Let us at the foot of the *Cross* go in our *Confessions*.

It was not then the *Roman Law*, nor the *Jewish Malice*, but our unchristian want of *Charity*, and our *Heathen impurities*, that hunted and pursued his life.

It was not his Affectation of Government to be *King of the Jews*, but our *Pride*, that was his true Crime.

Not his perverting the *Nation*, but our disordering *Nature* and corrupting *our selves*, that was the Charge drawn against him, *in foro poli*, in the Court of Heaven.

Our Sin of the *forbidden Tree* made him hang upon the *accursed One*.

Our *Presumptuous sins* struck him to the *Heart*.

Our darling *lusts* were the *lances*, that gored his blessed *Side*.

Our *Dalila's* tore off the *Nazarites* locks, and weakned his strength.

Our prophane *Atheistical reasonings* were those *Thorns*, which pierced his sacred *Head*.

Our *Crimson Sins* clad him in *scarlet*.

That *Face*, that made him fairer than the children of men, was bespattered with the *buffoonry-spittle* of our idle words and filthy communication.

Psal. 45. 2.

That *Mouth* in which was found no guile, was buffeted with the *fiat* of our iniquity.

1 Pet. 2. 22.

For the Harlotry of our glances were his innocent *Eyes* blind-folded.

For our evil *actions* his *Hands* were nailed, and for our false *ways* were his *feet* fastned to the *Cross*.

Our *Follies* made the *scourge* for his *Back*.

Our *Pride of life* exposed him *Naked*.

Our *Schisms* rent his seamless *Coat*; and our *Sacrileges* threw the dice upon his *Vesture*.

For our *Carnalities* his blessed *Flesh* was torn and mangled.

Our *Oaths* drained his *Blood*, and make his *Wounds* wider.

Our *Drunkenness* inflamed his *Thirst*, and put that *Cup of trembling* into his hand; and our *Ingratitude* and *Unkindness* was that *Gall and Vinegar*, which he refused to drink.

Mar. 15. 28.

Lastly, Our *wilful transgressions* made him numbred with *Transgressors*, even to the disparagement of his *Personal innocence*; so that the *Evangelist* himself brands him almost with the downright term of a *Malefactor*, Luk. 23. 32. for saying, ἑτέροι δύο κακῆργοι, *Two other Malefactors*, he plainly implieth, that this *Holy One* made the *Third*.

Let us *behold the Man* with these considerations, and *loath* and *abhor* our *selves*, and our *sins*; and, as he has suffered for us, suffer with him, crucifying our selves in a holy *Revenge*: Let this be (as 'tis call'd among the *Vulgar*) our *cleansing Week*, to purge out the leaven of vicious *Customs* and sinful *Habits*, that we may be fitted to eat the *Christian Passeeover*, provided for us, with the *unleavened Bread* of charity and the *bitter Herbs* of Repentance; and for the time to come take heed of crucifying the *Lord* anew by new commissions.

Heb. 6. 6.

Let us now take another station, and with the *Women*, that waited on Him; stand afar off, and *behold the Man* with *fear*, and apprehension of God's severe justice to impenitent Sinners.

Luk. 23. 49.

If God spared not his own *Son*, who thought it no robbery to be *Equal with God*, when he became sin for us;

Phil. 2. 6.

If the chastisements of our *Peace* lay sore and heavy upon the shoulders of him, that was *Mighty to save*;

Heb. 7. 25.

If the sense of *Wrath* due to sins, which were none of his own, were so sharp and cutting, the burden so unsupportable, that the *Son of God*, very God of very God, complains, God had deserted him, and left him upon the very brink of *Despair*, had not he been *heard in* what he *fear'd*, (as the Author to the *Hebrews* phrases it.)

Mat. 27. 46.

Heb. 5. 7.

If the Apprehension of the very *Business* he came into the World about, that for which he cloathed himself with our *Flesh* (which was, that he might be in a capacity of suffering for sins) were so dreadful, that nature recoils and shrinks back, and is forc'd into an *Agony*; and that the *Captain of our salvation* himself in the natural sentiments of his Humanity staggers and falters, as he is entring the *Lifts* of this bloody *Conflict*; in so much, that he prays earnestly, if it be possible, the *Hour* and the *Cup* may pass from him; and urges his Father with an argument from his Omnipotence, that All things to him are possible; and at last seems to have much ado to recover himself, with a *Nevertheless, not my will but thy will be done*; as if he had been willing still to have been excused, though he had from all Eternity design'd the *Enterprise*, foreseen the *Hardships*, and engag'd himself to *Performance* by an everlasting *Covenant*; so that he could not go back nor give out, neither in *Love* to Mankind, for whose sake he undertook this service, nor out of *Honour* to the *Engagement*, he had voluntarily entred into; nor in the *economy* of divine unrepalable *Decrees*.

Joh. 12. 27.

Mat. 26. 39.



If, I say, the *King of Saints* was so struck and appalled at the appearance of the *King of terrors*;

If a righteous person, as very *Pilate* confess him to be, (and for such the *Law* is not made) so feared the *sentence* and *curse* of the *Law*; and he that was *God* himself trembled to buckle with the *wrath* of *God* due to our sins, who himself knew no sin.

1 Tim. 1. 9.

2 Cor. 5. 21.

What cause hast thou, *Sinner*, who ever thou art, to let thy *Countenance* be chang'd, and thy *Thoughts* trouble thee, the joints of thy *Loins* to be loosed, and thy *Knees* to knock one against another? when thou seest the hand of *God* writing bitter things against thee, when thou hearest the *Curse* thundred down upon thee with a loud voice from Mount *Ebal*, and readest of those great *plagues*, and of long continuance, and sore *sicknesses* and of long continuance, with the whole *Bedroll* of calamities denounc'd upon the disobedient.

Deut. 28. 59.

How wilt thou contend with the Almighty, or be able to stand in judgment? should he open his eyes upon such an one as thou art, and bring thee into judgment with him; should he be extreme to inquire after thy iniquity, and search after thy sin; if he should renew his witnesses against thee, and increase his indignation upon thee; should he take thee by the neck, and shake thee to pieces, and set thee up for his mark? should he compass thee round with his archers, and cleave thy reins asunder, and not spare, but break thee with breach upon breach?

Job 14. 3.

Job 16. 17.

Job 16. 12, 13, 14.

If he spar'd not his own Son, finding thy sins upon him; how much less canst thou, Impenitent *Sinner*, expect to be spared, if thou be found in thy sins, and not found in *Christ*?

If this be done in the green tree, the Branch of the Lord; what will be done in thy dry root of bitterness? and how wilt thou be able to indure, what thy Saviour himself, (when he was in thy place) shrunk at; the severity of Gods justice, and fierceness of wrath due unto sin?

Isa. 4. 2.

Heb. 12. 15.

O let this sight of the Cross then fright thee out of the embraces of thy Lusts, and the consideration of thy Saviours sufferings for sin, exorcise and cast out all Temptations to evil. Behold this sacrifice of righteousness, and stand in awe and sin not.

Psal. 4. 4.

Behold the man too, and fear Him: For, if thou slight and undervalue him in this Mock-majesty of the purple Robe, and thorny Crown, he will one day come with glory to judge the world, and avenge him of his enemies, and of no enemies more severely, then of those who shall have been enemies of his cross.

Phil. 3. 18.

But let not this Fear of Gods Justice discourage us neither from a just Confidence in Gods Mercy. Let us advance again a step nearer, and Behold the Man, our Redeemer, in our behalf baffling Death, satisfying the Law, nailing the Handwriting against us to the Cross, cancelling our Debt, purchasing our Pardon, and sealing it with the Blood of the New Covenant.

Col. 2. 14.

His Bands have set us free.

The bitter Cup of his Passion was the Cup of our Salvation; his Sacrifice our Peace-offering, and his Death a perfect Atonement of our sins.

In a word, His Consummation est upon the Cross, the Consummation of his Sufferings was the Accomplishment of our Redemption. He did and suffered all for us, in our stead, and to our behalf.

God gave him, and he has accepted of him. Justice therefore being fully satisfied, Mercy it self now is but justice; God would not be just to the sufferings of his Son, and to the price of his blood, should not he be merciful to all true Penitents, to all that are in Christ, or Christ in them. Whence

1 John 1. 9.

Pfal. 37. 5.

כִּל עַל

יְהוָה דִּרְכָךְ

Devolue super  
Dominum viam  
tuam; Gl. in-  
terlin.

Mat. 11. 28.

Cant. 3. 14.

St *John* lays it down for a Rule, that *If we confess our sins*, that is, repent us of them, and forsake them, *God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins*, as being obliged to do it upon the terms of the very Gospel.

Roll thy self then upon Christ, O *sinner*, and he will deliver thee; Trust in him, for he has brought it to pass.

Come to him with thy heavy *load*, and thou shalt find *rest* for thy soul.

Lay hold upon the horns of this Altar, the *Cross*; Hide thy self, poor trembling *Dove*, that labourest under the guilt of thy sins, and art pursued with legal terrors, in the *clefts* of this *Rock*, in the *Wounds* of thy *Saviour*; and slake thy thirst, and cleanse thy iniquities at this *Fountain*, which was open'd in his side.

The Blood of Christ is of infinite Value; do not thou by thy Distrust or unworthy walking disparage it, and make it as a common thing.

Further, let us *Behold the Man* with joy, and gratulate his Conquest over Sin and Death. *Regnavit in ligno*:

Gen. 3. 15.

See the *Old Serpent* lies gasping at the foot of the *Cross*, having his *Head*, his Power and his Cunning, broken and trampled upon by the victorious feet of our *Saviour*.

Cant. 3. 9.

The *Cross* was his triumphant *chariot*, like that of King *Solomon*, made of the wood of *Lebanon*; and the *Gabbatha*, he stands on here, paved with Love.

Pfal. 20. 5.

The *Cross* is the Standard of our Confidence, and the Banner of our Triumph. O let us rejoice in his salvation, and in the name of our God set up our banners.

Pfal. 16. 6.

The *Cords* of his death, which racked and pang'd every joint and limb of him, which strain'd and crack'd every sinew of his *Body*, and put all the faculties of his *Soul* upon the stress, have made our *lines* fall to us in fair and pleasant places.

Those *sorrows of Hell* which compass'd him about, and laid hold on Him, were turn'd to Us into heavenly joys, and his *sackcloth* girds us with gladness.

Pfal. 68. 28.

O let not us ungraciously forfeit this *Act of Grace* and *Pardon*, by new acts of wilful sin. Nor let us hazard that *peace of conscience* and inward quiet, which *Christ's satisfaction* hath procur'd us, for the satisfaction of some carnal Lust; but let us hug the *Cross*, whereon all our comforts depend, and, out of *Gratitude*, crucifie our selves to the world, and mortifie our fleshly members; that having by the power of his *Death* kill'd sin in us, and subdued our corruptions, we may by the virtue of his *Resurrection* rise again with him, and, as he did, lead our captivity captive.

*Behold the Man* again, with what an omnipotent *Meekness* he goes through all the Scenes of his grief and passion; and shall we repine and fret at just providences? shall we murmur and be impatient under Gods hand, and carry our selves frowardly and peevishly, and think we are hardly dealt with, when we suffer justly for our sins, and not rather acknowledge with the *good Thief*, that *we indeed receive the reward of our doings*; but as for this *Man*, he had done nothing amiss, Luk. 23. 41.

See how unconcernedly he walks up Mount *Calvary*, and taking no notice of what Himself suffers, relents and bemoans the miseries that were to befall his Beholders; how quietly upon the *Cross*, as on his Death-bed, he sets his house in order, bequeathing his blessed *Mother* to his beloved *Disciples* trust, and dying in perfect Charity with the whole World!

Matt. 11. 29.

Let us learn of him, for he is *meek*; *Christ* has left us an *Example*, as well as a *Merit*, in his sufferings; that as by a lively *Faith* we become partakers

takers of the *Merit* of his *Death*, so in our passive *Obedience* we should copy out the *Example* of his *Meekness*.

Let us not then be like to the *Horse* and *Mule*, boistrous creatures, whose mouth must be held with bitt and bridle; but like the Christ-bearing *Ass*. It was that patient, humble *Animal*, that had the honour this Week to carry *Christ* in triumph through the streets of *Jerusalem*. Psal. 32. 9.  
Joh. 12. 14.

He that rightly considers the Indignities and Cruelties, that our *Saviour* voluntarily underwent for his sake, will not think much for *Christ's* sake to suffer, when he shall be called thereunto. Besides, that the Wood of *Christ's Cross* will sweeten all the Waters of our *Marah*, and sanctifie our most bitter Afflictions.

*Behold the Man* still with an eye of *Faith*. See here the *Carcase* exposed, if not on the *Cross*, at least in the *Sacrament*, which represents it, in the sacred *Symbols* of his *body* and *blood*. Be you the *Eagles*, to discern the *Lords* body, and to feed upon it in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving. Matt. 24. 28.

Believe with that earnestness, as he pray'd; and with eager senses apply the Benefits of what you behold. Luk. 22. 44.

Let us, as the *Prophet* did upon the dead child, stretch our selves upon his lifeless trunk, that we may receive life, and draw virtue from him; and by this *εφαρμογή*, the adaptation of faith, and coextension of parts, we may be made one with him, and incorporate our selves into his mystical body. 1 Kings 17. 22.

Let our *Faith* naturalize and indenison us into him, and infranchise us into all the glorious *Privileges*, he has purchas'd for us by this his precious Death.

But then let this our *Faith* be a *Faith working by love*; *Love* is the *Queen* of Passions, and now is the time of presenting her to her *King*, her *Sponse*, in her rayment of needle-work, when he stands expecting her, crown'd with Thorns, and clad with Purple, in the *Majesty* of his sufferings. Gal. 5. 6.

Therefore in the last place, *Behold we the Man* in his affectionate *Passion* with passionate *Affection*.

O unconceivable *Love*, which could pull down God from Heaven, and lift him up upon the *Cross*!

Christ's love was as strong as death; He has redeem'd thy life, by laying down his own, and has bought thy love at a dear rate. Look into his opened wounded side; and see, how his heart pants not so much for *Life*, as it beats for *Love*; Cant. 8. 6.

He, like thy faithful *Jonathan*, interpos'd himself betwixt his *Fathers* anger and thee, and turning all Gods fierce wrath and high displeasure, deservedly conceiv'd against thee, upon himself, bore in his own body those blows, which should have lighted on thee. Where now, *my soul*, is thy mutual love, and the exchanges of a reciprocal kindness?

He has defeated and overthrown all thy spiritual Foes, the *World* and the *Flesh*, and the *Devil* and *Death* it self, and lies gasping in the field over the dead, that thou mightst stay at home and divide the spoil. And wilt thou, *my Soul*, answer all these Gallantries of his Love, and Bravery of Affection, with a cold Indifference, or a disdainful Neglect? Psal. 68. 12.

He has, like *Jacob*, put on the form of a servant, and undergone almost five times seven years Apprentiship in the flesh for thee, and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he bare to thee; and wilt thou, *my soul*, for all this labour of his love return him no other Guerdon at last but *disap-* Phil. 2. 7.  
Gen. 29. 20.



disappointment, and put him off with a *bleer eyed* formal service, instead of a beautiful and well-favor'd hearty and *practical devotion*?

O love him, *my soul*, as he has lov'd thee, unto the death; Take off thy *Love* from every thing else, and place it intirely on Him: None of thy Friends and Lovers, none of all the Creatures could do that for thee, as he has done; None of them all could act such a suffering part, the surest tryal of a sincere affection. 'Tis dangerous for thee to settle thy *Love* elsewhere; Here thou maist safely bestow it, and let loose thy affections to a boundless *infinity*, and to an endless unexhausted *eternity*.

See, how, upon the *Cross*, and in the *Sacrament* of his Supper, he stretches out the Arms of his *love*, to embrace thee! Raise thy self, *Christian soul*, with the Wings of *love*, and fling thy self into the Arms of thy *Saviour*, who dies for love of thee.

And then when we have thus attended our suffering *Lord* with our *Wonder* and *Concernment*, with compassionate *Pity*, with a *Hatred* of sin, and a *Sorrow* for it, with the *Fear* of Gods *Justice*, and the *Hope* of his *Mercy*, with *Patience* in our own sufferings, and affectionate thankful *Acknowledgments* of His; then our *Beholding the Man* thus, will be the *Præ-ludium* to our beatific *Vision* of God, and our acquiescence in the constant *love* of him here on earth, will prove the Earnest and Essay of our heavenly and everlasting *Fruition* hereafter, which God of his infinite mercy grant us, for the sake of his *Christ*, our *Jesus*. Amen.

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Upon

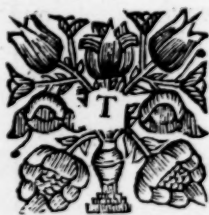
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## UPON THE RESURRECTION.

*A Sermon Preached at CHELSEY, on  
EASTER-DAY, 1669.*

St. Luk. XXIV. 34.

*The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.*



THE Resurrection of Christ hath been recommended down to us from earliest Antiquity, not only as an *Anniversary*, but as a *Weekly Festival*; being marked in the Calendar of the Church with the *Dominical Letter* throughout the whole year: every *Lord's day* being a solemn Commemoration of it. But this day, *Easter-day*, is the *Mother-Sunday*, from whom all the rest take their denomination, and have the honour to be stiled *Lord's Days*. And among the Primitive Christians, there was that regard had to this holy *Festivity*, that it was their usual Form of Salutation at this time, their every days Good morrow, 'Ανέστη Κύριος, *The Lord is risen*.

*The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.*

In which words we have,

I. A Relation or Report; *The Lord is risen indeed.*

II. The Confirmation or Ground of it; *and hath appeared to Simon.*

1. The Relation contains an *Article of Faith*, made out by matter of Fact.

A main *Article* of Christian Faith; the Resurrection, and that the Resurrection of Christ, and that a real Resurrection, ὁρθως, indeed, no Fiction, but a reality; no Phantom, or bare Appearance, but a bodily Substance.

And this not only a Tenet of Faith, but an Historical Truth, an Object of sense at that time; for so 'tis proved; he appeared, and that to Simon.

2. The Confirmation or Argument to prove it, Artificial, a weighty Testimony; from the Witness who affirms it, Simon: who, as he was idoneus testis, ἀξιόπιστος, a person of Credit, and so fit to be believed, one whose word might be taken: so he is testis oculatus, an eye-witness; who has it not by hearsay; ὡφθην, he was seen by Simon: who, as he was a man of a bold and forward faith, so here has a solid ground for it. For though Faith comes by Hearing, and that sense is the usual conveyance of supernatural Truths; and Simon himself had his very name from Hearing; yet Sight is a surer Evidence; Nature teaching the most incredulous to believe their Eyes. Wherefore, at first, for the greater assurance, Revelations were made by Visions.

Rom. 10. 17.

יָמְעוּ א  
יָמְעוּ אָוִיבִיט.

Heb. 11. 1.

'Tis true, Faith is of its self an evidence of things not seen; yet things that are seen, carry their own evidence along with them, and require no further proof, and so are a sufficient Ground to build a Perswasion upon.

The

I. The *Resurrection*, an Article of that concern, that the *Interest* and *Credit* of all *Christian Doctrine* depends upon it. So the *Apostle* argues most rationally, *If the Dead Rise not, then is our Preaching and your Faith all in vain.* Upon this Point the Hinge of *Religion* turns, For, says he, if  
 1 Cor. 15. 14.  
 1 Cor. 15. 19.

we had no hope but in this life, then were we of all men most miserable.  
 Were there no *Resurrection* at all, better be of any *Religion* than the *Christian*, whose *Patrimony* is only *Persecution*.

Every *Religion* pretending to make men like the God they worship; we who are the followers of a *Crucified God*, our very profession obliges us to be crucified too; that we may be made *Conformable* to him in his sufferings; if not in *Tribulation*, in outward *Pressures* and *Inflctions*, yet in *Self-denial* at least; which is the very *principium principians*, the main Principle of *Christianity*; and in the *Restraint* of natural Appetite and all carnal Desires, even to the suppression of the *Wisdom* of the flesh, and the pulling down and demolishing the strong Holds of our *Reasons* and *Inclinations*.  
 Phil. 3. 10.  
 Mat. 16. 24.  
 2 Cor. 1. 12.  
 2 Cor. 10. 4.

That we may suffer with him; we our selves, rather than fail, must exercise a *Carnificina* within our selves, and lay violent hands upon Nature, and do execution upon our Understandings, our Wills and Affections, and all our fleshly Members.

Upon this *Article* are founded and bottomed all *Evangelical Precepts*, all *Apostolical Counsels*, all *Ministerial Acts* of Exhortation and Encouragement to good Life, and all *Sacramental Administrations*.

Take away this, and the whole *Fabrick* of *Christianity* falls flat to the ground.

Nay, not only so; but farther, better be of no *Religion* at all, than of any at all, if there be no *Resurrection*, no *Life* to follow after this.

For if *Religion*, à religando, from obliging us; what need a man tie up himself and lay unnecessary obligations upon Nature, to make life vexatious and unpleasant, which has no further prospect than the Grave?

The *Atheist*, though he have not God, would have *Reason* on his side; and *Epicurism* would pass for as credible a *Doctrine* upon the grounds of *Reason*, as 'tis plausible to carnal Appetite; and be as full of *Convincions* as it is of *Allurements*.

If there were nothing to be expected after *Death*, it would be stark *Madness* for any one not to enjoy this *Life* to the utmost, and make the most on't; errant simplicity, out of a silly fond regard to unrewarded *Duty*, to neglect his present *Pleasure*, and to pay an attendance to an airy *Virtue*, which neither promises *Happiness* hereafter, nor secures it here.

For to talk of the *Tranquillity* of *Mind*, and to make that a sufficient *Recompence* of virtuous Actions, if there be nothing else behind, is but a piece of supercilious *Sophistry*: for if by their ἀταραξία, the undisturbed quiet of *Mind*, they mean *peace of Conscience*, (as they must, or it means nothing) *Conscience*, we know, supposes an *Account* to be given of actions, and a *Judgment* to be past upon them; it being the *Register* and *Tribunal* of all we do.

Now that there is no such *Account* given, no such *Judgment* past in this *World*, both *Stoicks*, as well as *Epicureans* do acknowledge: for as these looser Philosophers upon this very score deny *Providence*, because things run here at that random as they do; so those stricter ones cannot acquit *Fate*, which has subjected *Piety* so often to oppression, and Merits to neglect;



neglect; in the mean time, in this like *Fortune*, bestowing her favours upon the Wicked and Foolish, and advancing the Unworthy.

Wherefore if there be such things in Nature, as *Virtue* and *Vice*, as certainly there are, and sober *Heathens* have acknowledg'd; if there be a *Conscience*, which teaches us to put a difference betwixt them, as I suppose the most profligate person finds in himself one time or other: there must needs be a *Resurrection*, a Life to come, wherein men must give an *Account* of their actions, and have *Judgment* past upon them, which is not done in this.

But on the other hand, if there be no *Resurrection*, no Life hereafter, but Death puts an absolute Period to all; the *Epicure* makes a rational Conclusion, that *Conscience* is but a pitiful Scarecrow, and *Virtue* and *Vice* but empty Notions, and no real *Happiness* but in a voluptuous Life, and no *Religion* like that of making their belly their God.

Phil. 3. 19.

And thus we have discovered the very Ground and Bottom of all, but especially *Christian Religion*; but here, according to the sacred Proverb, *Abyssus abyssum*, One Deep calls upon another. Our next Stage leads us to the Ground of that Ground, and the Bottom of that Bottom.

Psalm. 42. 7.

There is a *Resurrection*; but whence is that *Article* of the *Resurrection* raised? Why? from *Christ's Resurrection*. The Lord is risen. And how does that appear? Why? He has appeared. He appeared to Simon.

Well then: As the *Article* of the *Resurrection* is the ground and foundation of our *Religion*; so *Christ's Resurrection* is the ground, upon which our *Resurrection* is laid.

For I think I may with as much validity invert the *Apostles* Argument, *I Cor. 15. 13.* But, says he, if there be no *Resurrection* of the Dead, then is *Christ* not risen; and again, *vers. 16.* For if the Dead rise not, then is not *Christ* raised. But say I too, If *Christ* be not risen, then is there no *Resurrection* of the Dead: For if *Christ* be not raised, the Dead cannot Rise.

And I prove my Inference from the *Apostles* own words, where he tells us after, *vers. 20.* that *Christ* is risen from the Dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. Now the first fruits, we know, sanctified the whole heap or lump, out of which they were taken.

Rom. 11. 16.

And this Consequence he makes good further, *vers. 21 & 22.* from the like Energy and Influence of the first and second *Adam*, in different Effects upon their Dependents. For since by *Man* came death (says he) by *Man* also came the *Resurrection* of the Dead. For as in *Adam* all die, even so in *Christ* shall all be made alive; and then *vers. 23.* he returns to his Metaphor of *First-fruits*, and explains it more fully. He had said, All shall be made alive; he goes on, But every man in his own order: *Christ* the first-fruits; afterward they that are *Christ's* at his coming.

As the *first-fruits* taken out of the heap, and consecrated to God's service, were first us'd themselves, and then sanctified all the rest for use afterwards: so *Christ* having had the Privilege to be rais'd first, will also in due time raise our mortal bodies; the only difference between our *Resurrection* and his being partly in order of Time, his first, and then ours afterward at the end of the World; partly in Dependence, ours being not only a Consequent, but an Effect of his.

And indeed the whole drift of the *Apostle* in that Chapter is mainly to prove the Necessity of our *Resurrection*, by the *Resurrection* of *Christ*: for there being some, it seems, in the Church of *Corinth*, that denied the *Resurrection* of the Dead, and yet had received the Doctrine of *Christ's*

*Resurrection*, which in the beginning of the *Chapter*, he calls the *Gospel* he had preached to them, he takes an Advantage from the Concession of that particular Resurrection of *Christ*, to prove the *Thesis* of the Resurrection in general, *ab absurdo*, by bringing them to a plain Contradiction.

Whose Argumentation (if reduced to *Syllogism*) would stand thus in *Ferio*.

Nullus mortuus resurgit,  
Christus fuit mortuus,  
Ergo Christus non resurrexit.

Where from *no Resurrection* of the dead, which some among them held as an Opinion, he fetches a *Conclusion*, that then *Christ is not risen*; which is plainly contrary to that Doctrine, which they themselves had profest to believe; so that if they deny the *Resurrection*, they must renounce their *Christianity* too into the bargain, and part with their *Faith* to hold up their *Opinion*.

In the main, it should seem, that the *Death* and *Resurrection* of *Christ*, but especially his *Resurrection*, was, at the first propagation of the Gospel and plantation of Churches, the great *Subject* of Preachers discourse, and the almost onely *Object* of the Hearers faith.

For with that solemnity he enters upon this Argument, *vers. 1. Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel, which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, by which also ye are saved; how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again according to the Scriptures.*

Insomuch that this *Article* upon the debate of choosing another *Apostle* into *Judas* his room, is lookt upon as the Summary of Christian Religion, and the main and onely Business of the Apostolical Function. Says *S. Peter*, *Some other, that has been with us all the time till Christs Ascension, must be taken in and Ordained.* To what end? For what purpose? *To be a witness with us of his Resurrection*, *Act. 1. 22.*

And accordingly *S. Paul* at *Athens* preaches *Jesus* and the *Resurrection*, the first thing he does, *Act. 17. 18.* so that the *Scholars* of the *University* took *Ἰησοῦ καὶ Ἀνάστασις*, *Jesus* and the *Resurrection* for two several *Deities*, to be the names of two strange *Gods*, which *S. Paul* recommended to their devotion.

There is a *Resurrection* then, and that grounded upon *Christ's Resurrection*. *The Lord is risen.*

Mat. 18. 13.

Nor is this all; *The Lord is risen indeed*: For it might be said, that this was a Fiction or a devised Story, like that of the *Jews*, that his Disciples came by night and stole the body away; or that at least it was some phantastical Apparition, like that of peoples walking after they are dead. But to confirm the truth of it, it is added that he is risen *indeed*: an Emphatical word that puts all out of doubt.

Now this *Particle* may have a double Construction; as being taken either *Logice* in a Logical sense as a note of *Asseveration*; and so it qualifies the *Proposition*; as if they should have said, It is very true, 'tis most certain, and you may believe it that *The Lord is risen*: or *Physicè*, in a natural sense; and so it shews the Nature and Manner of the *Action*; that it was performed not by any trick or slight or Legerdemain, but in truth and reality: *The Lord is risen indeed, οὐτως, that is, if I may have leave to make a word, Beingly*; really, substantially, and bodily; the

the rational *Soul* and humane *Flesh*, which by death had been separated, being now actually re-united and refitted for all the functions of Life.

1. *First*, Take it as a bare *Asseveration*; and so it adds weight to this *Article of Faith* from the Authority and Number of those that attest it, the whole *Jury* of the *Apostles* giving in their *Verdict*: and so it is much like that solemn Form used upon the like occasion by the *Apostle*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. *This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received.* And this in imitation of our *Saviours* own style, who was wont to preface the most considerable and concerning Truths, with an *'Αὐτὸς* or *'Αληθῶς*, *Verily I say unto you.* Which as it gives *Certainty* to the Report, so adds much *Weight* to it; and as it improves our *Assurance* for the *Belief* of it, so it heightens our *Obligations* to a more than ordinary *Regard*: it being a thing not onely of great *Truth*, as very *Trifles* may be, but of as great *Moment* and *Concernment* too.

So then even in this sense, the business of the *Resurrection* is no *Flam* or *Contrivance*, no idle trifling *Story*, but a most *Certain*, and withal a most *Weighty Truth*.

And thus as it is *Propositio Modalis*, then as *indeed* notes *Modum realem*.

2. *Secondly*, Look upon the *Manner* of the *Resurrection*, it was *Real* and *Substantial*. The *Report* is true, and the *Thing* was truly done; for the *Truth of Words* is grounded in the *Truth of Things*. For though *Words* have an immediate reference to the *Conceptions* of the *Mind*, as being, in the *Philosophers* definition, σύμβολα τῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ παθημάτων, the *Notes* and *Signs*, the expresse and representations of the inward *Thoughts*; yet let *Words* be never so conformable to the *Thoughts* within, they are *true* or *false* according to their conformity to the *Things* without.

*Arist.*

For instance, he that says that is, which *is not*, though he speak what he thinks perhaps, yet he does not say true.

So that to make the exact square of *Truth*, two things are requisite; a right *Apprehension* or *Conception* of *Things*, and *Speech* agreeable to that *Conception*: as the *Psalmist* has put them together, *Psal.* 15. 2. *He that speaketh the truth in his heart*; when a man rightly conceives of things in his *Heart*, and fairly delivers those his *Conceptions*; that is, when his *Thoughts* agree to the *Things*, and his *Words* to his *Thoughts*.

When either of these Conditions is wanting, that the *Thing* is mistaken, or the *Thought* misreported; it is then a *falsehood*, in the former case many times proceeding from *Weakness* and *Ignorance*, in the latter commonly from *Malice* and *Design*; that a *Material Lie*, this a *Formal* one, with intention to deceive.

Now this *Report* here is *True*, both as to *Matter* and *Form* both; the *Apostles* speaking what they thought, and thinking *id quod res erat*, what really was.

The *Lord is risen*, *ὁ κύριος ἐγείρεται*, that is, *verè*, as *Ens & Verum* are in the *Schools* convertible Terms.

The *Lord is risen* indeed, with that very *Body* which he was born with, and which he suffered with upon the *Cross*. The self-same *Body*, which had lain in the *Virgins Womb*, and was lately laid in the *Virgin-Tomb*, was now rais'd to life again, being animated and informed anew with the very same rational *Soul*, which had by death been parted from it.

It was a *Body* then, not a *Spectrum*, not a *Ghost* or *Spirit*, or an airy Representation, but a very *Body*, consisting of flesh and blood and bones:



and it was a *Soul*, not an assisting Form, not a *Genius* or Intelligence, moving the Body as a *Machin* by outward impulses; but a true humane *Soul*, enlivening and moving all parts of that bodily Fabrick, as an inward and natural *Principle*.

And thus the *Lord*, as he continued in the Interval of the Dissolution *Perfect God*, so he was again after the Resurrection, that is, the re-union of Soul and Body, (as before his death) *Perfect Man* too, of a reasonable Soul and humane flesh subsisting.

But yet with some *difference* too: seeing this glorified Body of his now after the Resurrection (as the *Apostle* tells us, ours also shall be) was privileged with some more excellent Qualities and Perfections, then it had before, of *subtily* and *agility*, and the like; yet not so as to destroy, but onely refine the *Nature* of it.

Mar. 16, 12.  
Joh. 20, 26.

As to instance; It could move more swiftly, put on various shapes, (as to the two Disciples at *Emmans*) enter into the room whilst the doors were shut (as some think;) suddenly disappear, and at last in the glorious Ascension tread Air, and mount it self up to Heaven; but it could not be in two several places at one and the same time, (as the *Papish* Schoolmen and *Lutherans* teach) nor do those things, which are repugnant to the very nature and condition of a Body.

It is true, some such Operations were perform'd before in the time of his Life; but those were Miraculous, and done by the Power of his *Divinity*: but these now are the ordinary Efforts of his natural Faculties, sublimated and improv'd by the *Resurrection*.

II. *The Lord is risen* then. But what is the Ground of this Report? *He has appeared*; we have Ocular demonstration for it: *He was seen*.

Luk. 24, 5.

Truth is; it was no ill Evidence of his *Resurrection*, that when they came to the Sepulchre, they could not see him there; and so the *Angel* reasons. *Why seek ye*, says he, *the living amongst the dead? He is risen*: How shall we know that? *He is not here. Come*, says he, *and see the place where the Lord lay*. The body missing, and nothing but the Grave-cloaths left; for which very reason the Beloved Disciple believed, *Joh. 20. 8*. His *non-appearance* here was a good Argument that he was risen and gone.

Joh. 20, 13.

But had this been all, the *Jews* calumny might have gain'd some credit, that he was stol'n away; or *Mary Magdalens* mistrust might have had place, that some body might have taken him away: wherefore fully to confute that *Suggestion*, to take off that *Suspicion*, as he did not upon search appear in the Grave dead, so he did appear elsewhere alive.

And that to several Persons, and at several Times, as *S. Luke* has briefly, yet fully given an account in the first of the *Acts*, that *Jesus shew'd himself alive after his Passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and being assembled or eating together with them*, he gave them order to stay at Jerusalem in expectation of the Promise, and then led them forth to *Bethany*, and there, upon *Mount Olivet*, took his solemn farewell.

I shall not go about to give an account of his several *Appearances*, but speak only of this particular one made to *Simon*: wherein we shall have these two *Queries* to answer.

I. Why *Peter* had this peculiar Favour vouchsafed him more then any of the rest?

II. Why his seeing of *Christ* is rather alledged then *Mary Magdalens*, and as *St. Matthew* relates it, the other *Mary* too, that saw him before *Peter* did?

For

1. For the first; *Peter's case and Mary Magdalene* is much the same. She had been a notorious *Sinner*, and was an exemplary *Convert*; no less illustrious in her Penitence, then she had been infamous in her ill Life; and therefore our *Saviour*, who came to save *Sinners*, and sets down such of that Sex even by name in his Pedigree and the List of his Progenitors, bestows on her the Dignation of his earliest Visit, after he arose to life again, He was first seen to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven Devils. Mat. 9. 13.  
Mar. 16. 9.

Besides, she made haste to the *Sepulchre*, and there sought her Lord betimes, at the dawn of day, before Sun-rising, while it was yet dark, so early in the morning that it was at the same time too, late at night, ὅτε ἔτι σάββατον, as soon as the *Sabbath* was over; and to those that thus seek him, with this Importunity, and Diligence, and Earnestness, he will be found.

Further, he had by his *Resurrection* prevented her Design, and disappointed that Charge she meant to have been at, in embalming his Body: this Appearance than may look like a Recompence of that intended kindness, to assure her of his *Resurrection*, and that her Tears were more acceptable then her *Balsam* and the most precious *Gums*.

Thus was it too with *S. Peter*, who had foully denyed his Master, and had wept bitterly for his fault, and wanted opportunity of reconciling himself personally, till *Christ* arose and hastned to accept his *Repentance*, and to confirm him in his Faith, and to re-assure him of his Love towards him. Mat. 26. 74.

Nor was he less ready to attend his gracious Master, who upon the first notice ran to the *Sepulchre*, and though the other Disciple out-ran him, yet he took the Goal first; and not content to look into the Tomb, went down to satisfy his Faith, and there believed, because he saw him not; and probably in his return from the *Sepulchre*, whilst he went ἀπὸ τοῦ ᾠκίου, aside to his own house, met with *Christ*; and then went and declared it to the rest, according to that Monition *Christ* had given him before; *Conversus confirma fratres*. Luk. 22. 32.

In summ; Our *Saviour*, such is his Clemency and loving Kindness, least *Peter*, as guilt is alway suspicious, should think his Master might bear in Mind the Unkindness of his Denial, to settle his thoughts, and oblige his love more than all the rest, shews him an extraordinary respect by shewing himself to him first, which possessed his heart with a powerful sense; so that at the Sea of *Tiberias*, but hearing that the Lord was on the shoar, he did, *jacuram sui facere*, threw himself over-board, and ventured his safety, out of haste to get to his *Saviour*; and that though before in such an attempt his Heart and He both began to sink, and Faith and Man, and all, had like to have miscarried. Joh. 21. 7.  
Mat. 14. 30.

And although but two or three days ago he swore and curst, that he knew not the Man; no question now, but in this blessed Interview and Recognition, he knew the Man very well, and with a resolved Faith own'd him for his God too. And this answers our second Query.

2. Secondly; Why *Peter's Testimony* is prefer'd before that of *Mary Magdalene*, and the other *Mary* too? Not onely that they were *Women*, more subject to fancy, and so more apt to be deceived; whereupon their words seemed to them as idle tales; but that the Apostles knew *Peter*, having lately committed so great an Offence, would be very wary and cautious in his Affirmations, and that he had by a long Conversation that thorough Acquaintance

Acquaintance with *Christ*, that he could not well mistake the Person.

Again, *Mary's* Report, by coming first, was received with a Prejudice; whereas *Peter's* Relation, that seconded it, gleaned up that Credit, which was denied to hers, and was with the more ease entertained and passed for Authentick.

And then in conclusion, though *Peter's* Evidence did argue the Truth of *Mary's* sayings too: yet the *Eleven* here did not think fit to lay the Weight of so great an *Article of Faith* upon her single credit, but rather to give it the stamp of *Apostolical Authority*, by putting it wholly upon *Simon*.

Nor does all this, or any part of this, we have here said, favour *Peter's* Pre-eminence over the rest of the *Apostles*; as if he, for having the Favour of this early and particular *Interview*, were deputed *Christ's* Vicar, and the Head and Great Pastor of the Church. For by this reason *Mary Magdalene* might challenge *S. Peter's* Chair from him.

Besides, that there is onely this *Evangelist*, that mentions this *Apparition*; and though *S. Paul* honour him in this Story with the appellation of *Cephas*; *S. Luke*, as if he meant purposely to decline his Primacy, calls him by the name of plain *Simon*: which admits of a doubt too, there being another *Apostle* of that name, had not *Paul* called him *Cephas*.

Beyond all this, I cannot but admire, that among all the *Apparitions* of our Saviour after his Resurrection, there is not mentioned any one, address'd particularly to the Blessed *Virgin Mother*.

I cannot think, that the Sense and Kindness of natural Relations dies in the next Life; but am rather persuaded, that those *Felicities* will be heightned in the mutual Congratulations of Friends and Brethren; and that on the other hand *Torments* are likewise aggravated; as appears by the *Rich Man's* care, lest his five Brothers should come where he was.

Luk. 16. 28.

Again, I need not say, how careful and deserving a Mother she was; how gracious and affectionate a Son He, who upon the very Cross, provided for her and made his beloved Disciple the Overseer of his Will; and how much she might stand in need of particular Cordials and Comforts after these three days swoons and faintings.

But what? I am confident that these and such like passages of filial respect and duty have been purposely (the holy Spirit so ordering it) omitted by the holy Writers (as *Moses's* Grave was concealed) to take off all pretence and colour of Authority from that gross *Idolatry*, where-with the Church of *Rome* does, to the scandal of Christian profession, worship the *Mother of God*.

She is only *Act. 1.* named, as one of the *Christian Church*, without any Distinction of Honour or Privilege of Place, and never else so much as once named in all the History and Concernment of the *Resurrection*.

In the last place, I must not omit that *Apophthegm* of our Saviour's in this case to our comfort, who believe without seeing; and 'tis but changing *Thomas* into *Peter*, and we read it thus: *Peter, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

John. 20. 29.

But what need we build our Faith upon *Simon's* Report, or be it *Cephas*? For alas! this *Testimony* was made use of, but in the dawn of the *Resurrection*; as those, that are earliest up, descry Day-break soonest. When as the *Sun* of Righteousness afterwards displaid himself so frequently to the



the whole Colledge of the Apostles, and shed his glorious Rays upon all his Disciples and their Associates, upon all the Professors of Christianity, the whole Catholick Church, as I may be allowed to call that Christian Assembly, when above Five hundred Brethren at once saw him (as I take it) in the Zenith of his glory, when he Ascended. Or indeed, what need have we of any Testimony at all, when the Lord is risen indeed, sufficiently proves it self? 1 Cor. 15. 6.

Let us go back then from Simon to the Lord, return from the Appearance to the Resurrection it self.

I told you, there was in those words *Matter of Faith*, and *Matter of Fact*, and they do both *mutuam operam*, prove one another.

The Matter of Faith, *a priori*, demonstrates the Matter of Fact: Christ's being Lord, that is, God and Man, concludes an evident Necessity of his rising again.

And then the Matter of Fact does *a posteriori* demonstrate the Matter of Faith: His Rising again evinces his Divinity.

The Excellence of the Person infers the Miracle of the Action, *per causam*, by way of Causality: and the miraculous Action proves, *ab Effecto*, by Effect and an inseparable Propriety, the divine Nature and Power of the Person.

First then from the Person to prove the Action; and that considering him either Abstractly in Himself, or in Relation to us as our Surety.

1. In his own Person, abstracting it from our Concerns, as he was an Innocent Holy Just Man, no way liable to the Law, and so had not forfeited his life: There was no Necessity thus of his Dying, and therefore there was a Necessity of his Rising again.

A man, that is by a good Title fairly posselt of an Estate, cannot legally be disseized; but if Violence do out him, the Law is oblig'd to restore him *postliminè*: nay, even for that time, in which he is by Violence kept out, he is owned in Law as still in actual Possession; as lately the whole Twelve Years of Usurpation are reckoned into the Reign of our Gracious Sovereign; nor did our Laws acknowledge any Interregnum between the Martyrdom of the Father and the Restitution of the Son.

Thus the State of Innocence was a State of Immortality, not only out of special Priviledge, but even upon the Principles of Nature. For whilst Appetite and the lower Faculties kept exactly to the Rules of right Reason; there was an even equal Temperature of Humours and such a well proportioned Refraction of Elementary qualities in the Composition of the very Body, that there was no *Prædominium*, so as one Contrary to prey upon and waste another, in time to the destruction of the Composition. 'Twas Sin brought in that Disorder.

Nor can I think that Maxim, they give in Physicks, *Quicquid generatur corrumpitur*, absolutely taken to be true; That whatsoever has a Beginning, must therefore have an End. Nor do I believe, that any thing in the World, but the absolute Power and Will of God, can destroy or annihilate the Soul of Man, or dissolve the Fabrick of the World. That being in its innate Principles and Constitution, and not onely by special favour, Immortal; and This, if God had not set a Term and period to it, in perpetual and regular Vicissitudes moving on towards Eternity. Though for That, all, even the Platonists and Pythagoreans, who held its *Præ-existence* to the Body, confess a Beginning: and This by Faith we understand was Created as the Author to the Hebrews says. Heb. 11. 3.

For though Nature in things here below continually Impair and Re-

new

new it self; yet so orderly is the *Motion* of the heavenly Bodies, and their *form* and *matter* both of such excellent Perfections, that had not God resolved to put an End to all things, and declared that his resolution, I see no reason from the Things themselves to conclude it.

2 Pet. 3. 3.

Nor does S. *Peter* deny the Argument, but find fault with the ill use, *Atheists* made of it against a great *Article* of Faith; wherefore he deservedly brands them with the name of *Scoffers*, that is, prophane persons, who took Advantage from the no visible Decay of Nature, to argue against a supernatural Revelation; viz. the *End of the World*, the *last Judgment*, the *Resurrection* and a *Life to come*; which, as I noted at our very entrance into this Discourse, are the main Fundamentals of *all* as well as *Christian Religion*.

Act. 2. 23.

*Christ* therefore thus consider'd ought not to have dyed; and therefore it was Just, and by consequence Necessary, that he should *rise again*, and be restored to Life, of which he was unjustly and murderously dispossest. This being the Charge against the *Jews*, that they put to death the *Righteous one*; and against *Judas*, that he had betray'd *Innocent blood*; which was done out of *Malice* by them, by him out of *Covetousness*, without any subordination or the least regard to the just and predeterminate *Counsel of God*, by which he was righteously delivered over to death, as *our Surety*, to suffer in our stead; which is our next Consideration.

Rom. 4. 25.

2. And upon this account the *Resurrection* was much more Necessary; for as there was an indispensable Necessity for his *Death*, that he should dye for our sins; He having undertaken for us, and made himself Principal in the Ingagement: so there was the like absolute Necessity for his *Resurrection*, that when he had paid our Debt, and satisfied the Demands of the Law, he should *rise again* for our *Justification*.

Heb. 9. 22.

The *Son of God* did not only espouse our *Nature*, but our *Quarrel* too; and therefore was to lay down his life in the Cause; for *without shedding of blood there was no atonement for sin*, no purchase of Pardon: but when this was done, all reason, that he should resume his Life, to attest his Performance, and to make good by his powerful Intercessions the *Covenant*, which he, as a *Mediator* and middle Party betwixt *God* and *Man*, (himself therefore partaking of both Natures, being *God* and *Man*) had by eternal Compact agreed upon with his *Father* in the name of all that should believe on him, and at least seal'd with his Blood.

1 Pet. 3. 18.

Now, as by dying he was to conquer Death, being put to death in the flesh; so by rising again, being quickned in the spirit; he was to maintain his Conquest, and solemnise his Triumphs over *Death* and *Hell*, in the self-same Nature which had suffer'd, wearing his scars and the prints of his Wounds still, as glorious Marks of that his Conquest. *I am he*, says he, *Rev. 1. 18. that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore Amen, and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.*

Heb. 10. 1.

It is most certain, had this light upon *Us*, we must have lain for ever under the unsupportable load of Divine Wrath; since nothing could make amends for an Offence done against an *Infinite Majesty*, but *infinite Punishments*, which upon us, who are of a finite Nature, could not be otherwise infinite then in their Duration. Wherefore those *Typical Sacrifices*, which were offer'd according to the Law, could not take away Sins, nor make the comers thereunto perfect, but were fain to be repeated daily, which shewed their imperfection and insufficiency. But *Christ*, being *God* as well as *Man*, was of Power to grapple with the Wrath of *God* and with infinite Merits to satisfy an infinite Justice: and thus, through the

the offering of his Body once for all, *has perfected for ever them that are sanctified*; and this without any need of Iteration, as the Romish Priests pretend, which only shew'd the weakness of the Levitical Offerings. Heb. 10. 14.

Nor was his Body fitted for any other use, *Sacrifice*, says Christ there; *and burnt offerings thou wouldst not*. Those Levitical Offerings would not serve turn. *Therefore said I, lo I come. A body hast thou prepared for me*: that so the two Natures being united into one Person, the Godhead might satisfy in the sufferings of the Manhood, (what was done or suffered in either Nature, being rightly imputed to the Person) for Christ was both in his Divinity, the Priest that offer'd, and in his Humanity the Victim which was offer'd. Wherefore, as the Sentence of the Law call'd for his Life; so upon the Cross (whereas our Holocaust and Paschal Lamb, being made sin for us, he was scorcht and burnt up with the flaming fierce wrath of God, due to sins, even to death:) the whole Business was done and finished, and the *Consummatum est*, pronounced. Heb. 10. 5. Joh. 19. 30.

But it was convenient, that for the greater Assurance of his being Dead, he should not immediately return to Life. He staid so long in the Grave as to convince the World he was really dead, but not so long as to rot or take any more hurt, *not to see Corruption*.

Death had according to the Sentence of the Law, seiz'd him, and had him deliver'd into her Custody; but it was Impossible, he should be long held there: His own Merits quickly fetcht him out, and redeem'd the Redeemer. For when as Death greedily laid hold on him, and thought to fasten her tooth upon this sacred Prey, she found that she did but *geminum frangere*, break her venom'd Teeth, and make her gristly Jaws sore, and loose her poisoned Sting in him by the shift. Act. 2. 24.

So then, before he came out, he paid the utmost farthing of our Debt and Prison-fees too; and though the Key was turn'd upon him, and he took a Lodging there for two nights; yet both his own Power and the Creditors Order together, made the doors fly open in good time for his release. For though upon our Account singly he went in, he came out again upon a double score of His own and his Fathers: and accordingly there are two Words to express his Resurrection, *ἀναστῆναι*, to rise again and stand up by his own Power and Virtue, and *ἐγερθεῖν*, to be raised by the Order and Power of another. For I am not altogether of Grotius's mind, that the former of these words is oppos'd to Death as a Fall, the latter to Death as a Sleep.

He arose then or raised himself, and he was also raised by the Father. He rais'd himself, as he said: *I lay down my life, and take up my life again*. Joh. 10. 18.

The Divinity, (to speak it with reverence) came with an Earthquake, and jogged and shook and wak'd the Humanity, and call'd it forth of its cold Marble Bed, by a kind of Reassumption anew to celebrate the Espousals; two Angels, the one at the Head of the Sepulcher, the Other at the Feet, standing for the Paranymphe, the Bridemen of this Solemnity.

Again, he was raised by the Father by way of Acceptilation, of Acquittance and Discharge. His Apostle Paul refused to come out of Prison, till the Magistrate, whose *Mittimus* had sent him thither, should come to fetch him out. The Case is the same here, and the same Ceremony observ'd; the Father sending an Angel purposely to roll away the Stone from the Monument, and to discharge and release the Prisoner; sitting upon the Act. 16. 37. Mat. 28. 1.



very Stone, to tell those so, that came to inquire what was become of him.

His being rais'd by the Father shows his *satisfaction*; and his raising himself proves his *Divinity*; which is our *last* Theme.

That he was the *Lord*, the *Messias*, the great *Prophet* that should come, the *Desire of Nations*, and the *Deliverer of Israel*, as the *Series* of his whole *Life*, which was nothing but a continuation of *Miracles*, did by a perpetual Chain of Argumentations evidence, and the dreadful *Tragedy* of his *Death*, when he was in the very *Epitaphs* of his *Suffering*, by a many wonderful and amazing Instances evince; so especially his glorious *Resurrection* did irrefragably prove to the perfect clearing of all Doubts and the confirmation of the most staggering Faith.

Joh. 20. 28. For although the *Faith* of his very Disciples droop'd and hung the head at his *Passion*, and their *Hope* seem'd to die with him, and for a time to be laid asleep in his *Grave*; so that after his *Resurrection* they could hardly believe the Relations of others, that had seen him; or scarce credit their own eyes, when they saw him themselves, what for Joy as well as Unbelief: yet when he had by some conversation re-acquainted himself with them, and had open'd their Understandings, by explaining and applying all that had been written of him from *Moses* downwards, their *Hopes* reviv'd, and their *Faith* it self had its *Resurrection*: insomuch that *Thomas*, the most diffident of them all, cries out, *My Lord, and my God*.

1 Cor. 15. 3. In him were all the antient *Predictions* accomplish'd and fulfilled, and in him the *Histories* of the New Testament kept even pace and just time with the *Prophecies* of the Old. He died according to the *Scriptures*, and he rose again according to the *Scriptures*. He himself promis'd it, and perform'd it; and, as he told the *Jews* aforehand, built up again in three days, what the Devil and They had been above three and thirty years a destroying.

Joh. 2. 19. The Translation of *Enoch* and *Elias*, as it was but a *Type* of *Christ's* Ascension, so was no more then what will befall many at the surprize of the great Day, when they shall be suddenly chang'd.

*Jonas* was buried alive, and the Whales disgorging of him at the three days end, was a lively Resemblance of this Graves giving up her Dead.

The *Shunamites* Son was recovered by a Prophet; but there was no Prophet here but himself to make these dead bones live.

The *Rulers daughter*, and the *Widows son* of *Nain*, and his friend *Lazarus*, were but *Preludia* to what he was to do for himself.

In the Conclusion; as to make out the certainty of his *Death*, he stay'd in the *Grave* three days; so to ascertain the truth of his *Resurrection*, he continued forty days upon Earth.

The Lord is risen then indeed. He is the Lord; therefore he is risen. He is risen; therefore he is the Lord.

I have done; I shall close all with a brief *Application*, or rather *Prayer*; that (as *S. Thomas* fondly said in *Lazarus* his case) we may in good earnest go and die with our *Jesus* by a serious *Repentance*, and by a lively *Faith* rise up again with him him to newness of Life; that having our eyes opened, we may know him at the breaking of the Sacramental Bread, and discern the *Lords Body*; and may all our life-time  
συναντῶμεθα, assemble our selves frequently together, eating and drinking

ing with him; and that by a vow'd new *obedience* and Amendment of life we may have our Conversation in Heaven, where He is now sitting at the right hand of God in the Glory of the *Father*. To whom, with the *Son* and Blessed *Spirit*, be all Glory, Honour, and Power, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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In vain would have been all the glorious *Instances* of that Stupendous *Work*; in vain all the holy *Ordinances* and saving *Means of Grace*; in vain were it for us to *Preach* and *Pray*, to *read* and *hear*, to partake of the one or the other *Sacrament*; did not the holy *Spirit* by his vital *Presence* and inward *Assistances* inliven the *Ordinances*, and impregnate and actuate the outward *Means* to our *Spiritual Advantage*.

Our *Honours* and *Estates*, all the *Comforts* of *Life*, and *Blessings* of *Providence*, would without this *Comforter* prove the greatest *Curses* to us; all our *Knowledges*, whether in *natural* things or *Spiritual*, unless this *Spirit of Truth* lead and guide us, would but serve only to aggravate our *Condemnation*.

'Tis he by setting on his *Seal*, that confirms and makes good to us the *Mercies* of the *Father* and the *Merits* of the *Son*.

Deservedly then has the *Church* honored this great *Article* of our *Creed*, *I beleive in the Holy Ghost*, with this three days *Festivity*

My *Text* suits with the concerns of the *Time*; wherein you have these three *Parts*.

I. A *Promise* of the *Holy Ghosts* coming.

II. A *Character* of his *Person*.

III. His *Commission*, or the *Business* he comes about.

I. The *Promise* of his *Coming* implied in these words; *When the Comforter is come*, and *I will send him*: for so the *Comforter* is explain'd, *Job*. 14. 26. and *The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost*; and accordingly in the *Ambrosian Creed* 'tis said, *Also the Holy Ghost the Comforter*.

II. The *Character* of his *Person*, both in what *quality* and with what *authority* he should come.

1. His *Quality* made out by two *Titles*.

The *Paraclete*, the *Comforter* (say we) and which adds to our *Comfort* that he is no counterfeit.

*The Spirit of truth*.

2. His *Authority* in the *Manner* of his *Coming* or his *Mission*, twice repeated.

*And he procedeth from the Father*,

*Christ will send him from the Father*.

III. His *Commission* or *Business*, about which he is sent, for which he comes; was to *testifie* of *Christ*.

I. In the *Promise* I shall handle these two *Questions*; that, since *Christ* himself, the *Son of God* and *second Person* of the blessed *Trinity* was come in the *shew*.

I. What need was there of the *third Persons* appearing, of the coming of the *holy Ghost*, at all?

II. Supposing it were needful that he should come; whether he were not come, and had sufficiently shewed himself already?

Of these the first will give us the *Reason* of his *Coming*, *Why* he came and the second, the *Manner* of it, *How* he came.

1. To the first; What need there was of his *Coming*; since as our *Saviour* himself intimates in one of his *Parables*, and the *Author* to the *Hebrews* seems to tell us, the sending of his *Son* was lookt upon as the last remedy; and therefore no further *Method* could rationally be expected at *Gods* hands, no higher *Obligation* could possibly be laid upon the *Children of men*, to reduce them to terms with *Heaven*, and bring them to thoughts of *Peace* and accomodation; and if that did not prove *Effectual*, nothing else in all *likelihood* would do.

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Mat. 21. 37.  
Heb. 1. 2.

It is true ; *That* must be acknowledg'd a powerfull and an Allsufficient dispensation for the Conversion of Men; if any thing could have been of force, if any thing might have prevail'd with them.

But for all that, we have a *But* in the Text, which by referring us to the foregoing Words will help us to a clear state of the business, and convince us of the necessity of sending the third Person too on this errand. *If I had not done among them, saith Christ, ver. 24. the works, which no other man ever did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. But when the Comforter is come, &c. he shall testify of me.*

Gen. 1. 2 6.

All the *three Persons* of the Blessed Trinity ( you see ) were concern'd and engag'd for the Recovery of falm man, and for his Creation at first ; and no question there was at the supreme Council-Board a Consultation held, and a Resolution pass'd, as well for *Reficiamus hominem*, Let us redeem man, as there had for *Faciamus hominem* let us make him; and thereupon all *Three* took their turns in this Divine and Mysterious *Oeconomy* of addressing themselves to the sons of men,

Such has been the unwearied goodness of God towards sinfull miserable Man, that they have *all Three* and *each of the Three*, together and singly, treated with us, and graciously summon'd us to our Obedience and invited us to an acceptance of Salvation : and yet such hath been our stubborn Perverseness, such a desperate Resolution we seem to have taken up of ruining our selves; that we stand out still all their gracious *Summons*, make stout resistance to all *Attempts* of Kindness that are made upon us, and to our own hurt slight and frustrate all *Methods* that have been used towards us by any or all of the *Three*; that neither the *Power* of the *Father* can move us to submit and render our selves, nor the *Wisdom* of the *Son* prevail with us to come in and be happy, nor the *Grace* of the blessed *Spirit* make our hard Hearts relent, and our ungracious Spirits yeild to his tenders of Love

Gal. 4. 4.

The *Father* manag'd the Business first, as it were in his own Person, making dreadful Manifestations of himself to the Old world; especially, when as upon this very day ( being the 50<sup>th</sup> after their *Passover*, as the Christian *Pentecost* is the 50<sup>th</sup> from *Easter*, ) he delivered the *Law* from the top of Mount *Sinai*, out of the midst of thick Clouds, with Thunder and Lightning in an audible Voice, to the whole People of the *Jews*; and further for many years attended them himself as his Charge, owning the Government of that Nation as His, all the time of the *Theocracy*; indeed the whole time of the *Old Testament*, as is clear by that usual Form, *Thus saith the Lord*, upon all occasions: and yet in all this time of his Government, was, ( as he himself complains by *Moses* and his other *Prophets* all along ) so wearied and tired out with the peevish humors of a refractory stiff-neck'd People, that he does in a manner *exauctorate* himself and lais down his Government, till at last ( when even in this sense the *Scepter* was departed from *Juda* ) in the fulness of time he sent his onely *Son*, in the likeness of our sinfull flesh, with full Power to treat, manage, and conclude betwixt Him and Man, and to put a final end and Period to that controversy, which had been so long depending, by making a plenary Satisfaction for sin, and making known the whole Will of the *Father* concerning our Salvation.

Isa. 9. 6.

1 Cor. 15. 27.

And now having put the Government upon his shoulder, who was mighty to save; and put all things under the Blessed Feet of him that brought good tydings to the World; having ( as *Christ* himself at his departure

parture hence declares his Commission, *Mat. 28. 18.*) given him all power both in Heaven and in Earth: One would have thought this had been enough, there had been no more to do; but that (as our Saviour cried out upon the Cross) all had now been finished and consummated.

But this which seem'd God's ultimate Design, *viz.* the sending of his Son, did not take neither, nor had its Effect upon the impenitent heard hearted *Jews* his Countrymen; *He came to his own and his own received him not*; *Joh. 1. 15.* nor did they apprehend him by Faith, or shew him any Reverence, but shut their Eyes and opened their blasphemous Mouths against all the glorious *Miracles* he did amongst them, those undeniable Evidences of his *Divinity*, and with profest Hatred and eager Malice persecuted him to the Death, laid hold on him, and with wicked hands kill'd him and flung him out of the Vineyard, *Mar. 12. 8.*

Wherefore saith *Christ*, which is the Connexion; since they have hated the *Father* and me, notwithstanding the Works I have done, which no man ever did besides; yet *When the Comforter comes, he shall witness of me.*

So then here after this Defiance of the Son of God, and this Despite done the People of the *Jews* to their own *Messias*, the *third Person* is to take his turn; God never leaving off his Importunities with us, to convince the World against *Jewish* malice, that this *Jesus* was the *Christ*, and to propagate his Doctrine to the ends of the Earth by bearing witness of him (as he did this day with a witness in all kinds of Languages to all Nations under Heaven) and by gathering a Christian Church, and by presiding in it till *Christ's* second coming, as we shall by and by have occasion to discourse

2. But then (which was our *second Query*.) Why is there mention made here of *His Coming*, who was always present from the beginning of the world? for even then the Spirit of God *moov'd upon the face of the water*, *Gen. 1. 2.* and strove with the old World, *Gen. 6. 3.* and all along the story of the *Old Testament* nothing so frequent to be met with as Remarkable Discoveries and Operations of this Spirit; and even in our Saviours time upon Earth, *Christ* being conceived of the holy Ghost; and then (which was a very illustrious Instance) at his *Baptism*, he took upon him a visible shape, appearing in the innocent lovely features of a Dove, *Mat. 3. 16.* the whole Trinity at the same time making a solemn Visit to Earth at the Inauguration of our Blessed Lord to his great Office; and afterward we read, *he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness*, *Mat. 4. 1.* and he himself breathed the Spirit upon his Apostles, *Joh. 20. 22.* and yet here he promises he should come and he would send him; as if he had not yet bin come: and elsewhere, tells them, that *unless he goes the Comforter would not come*, *Joh. 16. 7.* Indeed whilst the Children of the Bridechamber had the Bridegroom with them, there was the less need of a Comforter.

To this I answer, that indeed the Spirit was upon several Occasions attending before, yet not so come, as he was to come after *Christ's Ascension*; and that in these three respects. For then he was to come,

1. After a more signal and solemn Way.
2. In a more plentiful copious Manner.
3. To a more constant Abode and settled Residence in the Church.

1. With greater Solemnity; as the story of this Day tells us, when the whole *Catholick Church*, as I may very well call that Assembly of Disciples *Act. 1. 15.* met at *Jerusalem* in expectation of the Promise, (at which time there was a Confluence of devout People of every Nation under



under Heaven the *holy Ghost* usher'd in with a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, came down and sat upon them all in the shape of *fiery cloven tongues*.

First *Tongues*, to denote infused Knowledge and Elocution, to enable them to act in their several Provinces according to their Commission, which sent them into all the World to teach all Nations.

Then *cloven Tongues*, to shew the Multiforimity of his Gifts and Administrations.

And lastly *fiery Tongues*, to be an Embleme, with what fervour of Zeal and activity of Endeavours they should propagate the Gospel; what *burning and shining lights* they should prove in the World; *shining* with mysterious Knowledges and exemplary Piety, and *burning* with affectionate Charity and Love to the Souls of men.

Never did the *Holy Spirit* make such a Solemn Appearance in the World before.

2. He shed himself abroad in greater *Abundance* then ever; and that both *Intensively*, in respect of higher degrees, of larger measures and proportions, by which he dealt out himself at this time; so that it is said, they were *filled with the holy Ghost*, and *baptized with the holy Ghost* and with fire: insomuch that upon this account *John the Baptist*, though he were the greatest of the *Prophets*, yet *the least in the Kingdom of Heaven*, that is, the least true member in the Church of Christ under the Evangelical dispensation was *greater than he*, that is, more inlightened and assisted by the Spirit.

And then *Extensively*, in regard of those Multitudes, whom he came upon. When as before, in the former *Oeconomy*, he had onely bedew'd *Gideons* fleece, the *Israelitish Church*, and all the ground about was dry: Now he enlarges his Watch, and powrs forth himself in liberal Showrs upon all the barren *Heathens*.

Now was fulfill'd that Prophecy of *Joel*, as *St. Peter* applies it in his *Whitsun Sermon*; *And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, &c.*

Thus at *S. Peter's* preaching, the *holy Ghost* fell on all them that heard the word; *Act. 10. 44.* and by *S. Paul's* laying on of hands, the *holy Ghost* came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied *Act. 19. 6.* who before *ver. 2.* had not so much as heard whither there was an *holy Ghost*.

3. He came to stay, to reside, I and to preside in the Church *Joh. 14. 16.* *He shall abide with you for ever.* So that the *Apostles* in their Council held *Act. 13. 28.* use this Sovereign Style, *Visum est Spiritui sancto et nobis*; It seemed Good to the *holy Ghost* and to Us, as if the blessed Spirit had been *Chairman* and *President* of the Council. And *Act. 20. 28.* *S. Paul's* charge to the *Diocesans* of his Province is, *Take heed to your selves and to all the flock, over the which the holy Ghost hath made you ἑπισκοποις, Bishops or Overseers*; owning the *holy Ghost* as *Oecumenical Bishop* to order all Church-affairs.

And this was it, our *Saviour* promised them, that *He would be with them to the end of the World*, *Mat. 28. 24.* which was not to be by bodily Presence, but by the Assistance and Cooperation of his Spirit.

Thus, as before in the Old World, the Spirit strove with men, till the Deluge of waters came; so under the Gospel in these last and worst times, the Spirit is sent to lye Leiger among us.

But I do not intend by this *Residence* of the Spirit in the Church, to confine him either to the *Papists Conclave* on the one hand, or on the other hand to a *Sectarian Conventicle*; for, though the Spirit blows where he listeth,

*Act. 9. 17.*  
*Act. 1. 5.*

*Mat. 11. 11.*

*Joel. 2. 28.*  
*Act. 2. 17.*

eth, yet sure he delights there to be most, where *Christ's Doctrine* is most soundly taught, and his *Ordinances* most purely administred.

We are not to circumscribe the *Spirit* within such narrow Limits, as to restrain his *Virtue* to this or that particular *Fraternity* or Society of men; who was to accompany all the *Apostles* into their several Plantations, whose Influences consequently were to be as *Universal* as the *Church* it self was, whose *Gifts* and *Graces* were to be the publick Stock, the Treasury and Staple of the whole Christian Community, by whom is maintain'd and manag'd, as it follows in the Creed, the *Communion* and Fellowship of the Saints and all true Believers, wheresoever disperfed over the face of the whole Earth, and whose main Business of his Coming was in a word to guid the *Church Universal* in the right way; as we shall find by the *Character* here given him: which is the *second* main part of our Discourse.

The *Character* partly shews his *Offices*, partly his *Mission* and the Authority, by which he is impowered to execute those Offices.

II.

His *Offices* are to be *Paracletus*, commonly taken for a *Comforter*, but most properly an *Advocate* (so rendred, 1 *Joh.* 2. 21. where 'tis spoken of Christ himself. *We have an Advocate with the Father*; and so Christ promises his Disciples, *Joh.* 14. 16. ἄλλος παρακλησίης, another *Comforter*, say we, or rather another *Advocate*: ) and to be the *Spirit of Truth*; the *Witness*, the *Interpreter*, the *Judge*, the perpetual *Dictator* of all saving Truth, and the constant *Guid*, and powerful *Teacher* of it.

The *Authority* of his Agency in the Church lies in this, that he proceeds from the Father, and is sent from the Father by the Son.

I. First then, as to his *Offices*; a *Paraclete*, that is, in its proper Signification, an *Advocate*, and that in two respects; in respect of *Christ*, and in respect of *Us*.

1. In respect of *Christ*; he is *Christ's Advocate*, to plead for him, and the *Truths* delivered by him, and the great *Works* wrought by him; and to convince the *World* of his Divinity and Mediatorship, that he was the *Son of God* and the true *Messias*, that was foretold by the Prophets; and that all he did or suffer'd in the flesh was for our Salvation, and to Set this home upon the Conscience, and apply it with effectual Evidences to the Souls of Believers, giving them full Assurances of their being Accepted in the Satisfaction of *Christ*, and leaving the rest of the World, in their wilful Ignorance or malicious Opposition, altogether inexcusable: according to *Christ's* own Denunciation, who though he put up Calumnies and Reproaches cast upon himself, yet threatens, that whosoever should speak against this *Spirit*, which was now the only means left, and the last application God would make to the World; and should stand out his Orders and Managery in Church Affairs, and would not be wrought upon to a Compliance with him, but rather blaspheme and censure, and quarrel with him, should be utterly unpardonable: that is, it was a Sign, and would be so taken of an obdurate impenitent Soul, that now were past all hope of having any good done upon it, *Mat.* 12. 32.

And this much aggravated, because he is not only *Christ's Advocate*; but,

2. He is also *Advocate* in respect of *Us*. He is our *Advocate*; for *Christ* being gone up to the right hand of Glory, there to plead his Merits with the Father, and to make Intercession for us, has deputed and delegated this blessed Spirit ἄλλος παρακλησίης, another *Advocate*, to help our Ignorance

rance in Prayer, to teach us what we ought to pray for, and how we ought pray: *He helps our Infirmities, and unceasingly lives, more then intercedes for us with unutterable groans*, Rom. 8. 26.

And it is not improbable, that at first, in the earliest times of *Christianity*, there were, by his Supplies and Effusions of the *gift of Prayer*, provisions made for the Necessities of the *Churches* by *Liturgies* and standing publick *Forms*; some Remains whereof are still extant in ancient Copies of that kind. At least 'tis more then probable, that he has all along, and does still endue some persons with peculiar Abilities to that purpose.

Wherefore when the publick Authority of the *Church*, and wholesome Laws have appointed such *Forms*, then they have in a more then ordinary manner the Stamp and Signature of the *Spirit* upon them; and surely they do call for the reverence and attention of the People, of all those I mean, who would be esteem'd genuine *Members* of that mystical *Body*, whereof *Christ* is the *Head*, by whose *Spirit* the whole is compacted and fitly join'd together; and would approve themselves obedient and true Children of the *Church*, and give themselves up to be led by the guidance of that good *Spirit*.

Eph. 4. 16.

We have an ordinary Phrase, which is much abus'd, *to pray by the spirit*; that is, as it is generally thought, not out of a Book; which is a popular mistake, but so prevailing an one, that many there have been, and some likely there are still, and those no mean ones in the judgement of their Followers, who boldly adventure (at least are thought so do) upon the sudden, without Premeditation or due Preparation thereunto, to pour forth Prayers in Publick.

These are look'd upon as *gifted men*; these are cry'd up to have the *Spirit*: I wish heartily they may have the good *Spirit*.

But let me ask them; What do they think of those *Worthies* of our Religion, that compiled these *Forms* for us, and seal'd them with their Blood, had not they the *Spirit*? Surely, we cannot in charity deny but they had; and then why is not the *Spirit* in these *Forms*, which have been premeditated and studied by pious persons, and with deliberate Advice recommended by our Superiours to publick Use, as well as in those *conceived* (and sometime *conceited*) Prayers of private persons?

No doubt; if we will but humbly and carefully (as we should do) apply our selves, we may use these *Forms*, and yet *pray with the Spirit* too.

1 Cor. 14. 15.

We do not quarrel *Holy Writ*, because it proves a *dead Letter* to those, who through their own fault with dead Hearts read and hear it, without suitable Affections, and without craving the Assistance of the *Spirit* to go along with them; whereas pious, devout, humble, meek Souls find themselves much advantag'd by those very passages, which to other looser minds give no relish at all.

Let us not then impute our own dulness and indisposition of Spirit to our *Service-Book*; since those excellent useful *Forms* there prescribed are to receive *Power* and *Virtue* from the Devotion of those who use them; nor let us lay the fault of our own *Lethargy* upon the *Liturgy*.

Again, does not the *Spirit* in these *Forms* help our *Infirmities* of almost all kinds? but he has no where promised to help our *Presumptions*. And he that either out of an Ignorant *Confidence*, or an over-weening *Conceit*, or a bold *unwarrentable Zeal*, runs such an hazard in these sacred Duties; at least that rushes into such publick Places to do the Work of God negligently,



lently, and, as I may say, hand over head, will be thought in the opinion of wise men *presumptuous*, and cannot in reason expect the Assistance of God's Spirit to such rashness.

And it has been too manifest, that some such have been in the Exercise of their pretended *Gift*, like young Swimmers, that throwing off their Bladders, go past their depth, suddenly surprized into desperate inconvenience: and yet 'tis hoped, that sober understanding men will not reflect from hence upon the *Function*, because some rash Undertakers have deservedly been disown'd by *Gods Spirit*, and left to themselves in such Performances.

Let us therefore all of us, *Ministers* and *People*, make a safe and sober use of the *Spirits Advocateship*, which he hath been pleased to afford us, in our publick Attendances upon the *Church*.

But enough of this, if not too much, which the natural *Importance* of the *Word* led me to.

We come now to the *Common* notion of a *Comforter*; Christ having assured them, that at his Departure he would not leave them *comfortless*, *Job. 14. 18.* and accordingly that he would send them the *Paraclete* to be their *Comforter*, to support and bear up their Hearts under Persecutions in evil Times, which were to come upon the *Church*, to fill them with Joy and Peace of Conscience, amidst all their worldly pressures and sufferings, and to make out to them with inward Consolations what should be wanting in outward Providences: particularly to apply to dejected minds and troubled consciences the Consolations of the Gospel, the comfortable Doctrine of *Christ's Satisfaction*, and that Redemption, which he had wrought for man, and to bring them to a fixed Rest, and a thorough Acquaintance in his Merits, and to a blessed Expectation of future Joys and Glories, which might more then counterpoise all the light momentary Afflictions of this Life.

2 Cor. 17.

There have been a *sort of men*, who would be accounted the most *spiritual* ones, who have taught things quite of another strain from all this; that God has made some men purposely to ruine them for ever, and that let them do what they can for their lives, damn'd they must be however at last.

Certainly this *uncomfortable Doctrine*, whoever broacht it, never proceeded from this *Comforter* here in the Text: no nor I fear (whatever Advantage they think to make of S. Pauls *δυσνόητα*, places hard to be understood, for their purpose) nor from the *Spirit of Truth* neither, which is the other Title, the *Holy Ghost* is here set forth by.

The *Spirit of Truth*, in several Considerations, as being the *Witness* of Truth, the *Interpreter* of it, the *Judge* of it, the *Dictator* of it, and the *Teacher* of it. I shall briefly touch at all these.

1. He is the great *Witness of Truth*: It is true; other Witnesses we have besides. God has not left himself nor his Word without Witnesses.

Act. 14. 14.

The *Consent* of all Ages and Nations of the World; the *Character* of the style, in which this Book is written, the *Antiquity* of the Writings; the wonderful *Conservation* of them in the hottest Persecutions, the *Attestation* of *Heathen Writers* to several of the most considerable passages, the Difference, and yet harmonious *Agreement* of the holy Penmen; the invincible Constancy of *Martyrs*, with many other such *Instances*, make up a round sufficient *Testimony*, to evince *Scripture* and the Truth of *Christi-*

an *Doctrine*, and are much more than a heap of meer Probabilities.

But now when the *Spirit* comes, he brings Demonstration along with him, and makes it Evident; he writes over the *Scripture* again with a Sunbeam, and clears all before him, and puts it out of doubt, inlightning the Understanding, and ascertaining the Will.

2. Then he is the best *Interpreter* of Truth, to clear difficulties, and to explain hard places.

Indeed the knowledge of the *original Languages*, perusal of *Fathers* and other *Expositors*, search of *Antiquity*, collation of *Scriptures*, the *Analogy* of Faith, a *Logical* resolution of the Context, and study of sound *Philosophy*, and the whole *Encyclopedy* of all acquired Learning; and besides these, natural *Indowments*, a good *Judgment*, a ready *Wit*, and a retentive *Memory*: I say, all these are not only useful, but necessary *Aids*, for the finding out the right Meaning and purpose of *Holy Scripture*.

For it is not the business of every ignorant person, upon bare pretence of the *Spirit*, being destitute of these *Aids*, to undertake this Work.

But to make these *Helps* truly effectual and rightly serviceable to that end; the *Illumination* of the *Blessed Spirit* upon an humble Understanding and well disposed Mind, makes a Man in his light to see perfect light.

3. Next, when any doubt arises, any *Controversie* or Question in *Doctrine* is started, the *Spirit* is the supreme *Judge* to determine.

I pay a due Reverence to the Judgment of *Antiquity*; and honour gray-hair'd *Theology*, and do with a filial Duty submit to the Opinions of the *Primitive Doctors*, those especially, who liv'd nearest the *Apostles* time, [when the waters of life ran in the purest Streams] in those things especially, whereto I have their *consentient Suffrage*; and I do very believe, that their Decisions against upstart *Heresies* were assisted by the *Spirit*. I magnifie the four first *Councils*, and think them worthy every good Christians veneration. Nor do I utterly exclude a rightly inform'd and modest *Reason*, from weighing and examining even spiritual things; because though they are *above Reason*, they are not against it.

But then the *General Councils*, since those four first have been found tardy sometimes; the *Fathers* otherwhiles, when they are single in an Opinion, warp and go aside; and *Reason*, which is to be but as the *Bondswoman*, is too apt to perk up *Hager*-like, and to crow over Faith, which ought to be own'd her Mistress.

These then are to be lookt upon no other than as *petty Judges* with a delegated Power.

It is the *Spirit* is the *Supreme Judge*, to whose feet all is at last to be devolv'd, and under whose Directions those forementioned are useful Instruments: and upon this account, in stating *Matters of Faith*, we may confidently relie upon the concurring Judgment of the *Antients*, those more especially, that lived near *Scripture*-times.

And who so fit indeed to sit *Judge*, as he that Dictated *Scripture*? The *Spirit* is perpetual *Dictator* of Truth; for the holy Penmen wrote as they were moved, and as their Pens were guided by his hand. So the *Nicene Creed*; who spake by the *Prophets*.

2 Pet. 1. 21.

He consign'd the holy *Canon of Scripture* to be the Rule of *Doctrine* and Life.

The

The *Apocryphal* Writings, though they are full some of them of excellent Moralities, yet have some weaknesses in them unbecoming the Majesty and Wisdom of the blessed Spirit.

And therefore for this reason, the Interpretation and Judgment do properly, and by way of Eminence belong to the *Blessed Spirit*, the Author of Holy Writ; since *eiusdem est interpretari, cuius est condere*. He that makes a Law best knows what he meant by it.

5. In the last place, he is the most absolute *Teacher of Truth*; for whereas other Teachers can but infuse into the Understanding, he infuses Understanding and all, and acquaints us with things beyond the Verge of Nature, and above the Ken of Reason.

He, says our Saviour, *shall teach you all things*, Joh. 14. 26. and his beloved Disciple tells them he writes to, 1 Joh. 2. 20. *You have an Unction* (that's the work of the Spirit ye know) *and ye know all things*; that is, all things necessary to Salvation, all things that you need to know; for else every good Christian should be an able *Philosopher*, a good *Mathematician*, and an absolute *Scholar* too. We mean then that he is a *Teacher* of all saving Truths.

Yet this is not to turn our other *Teachers* out of their *Chairs* and *Pulpits*, as though we needed them not; for they are *Instruments* subservient to the *Spirit* for the Conversion of Souls, and so far as the Spirit co-operates with them, so far their teachings are effectual; who, as he bloweth where he listeth, so disdains not to work with the most unlikely instrument and his virtue is the same, whatever the Instrument be.

This holy *Spirit*, as he guides us into all *Truth*, so he leads us into the ways of *Holiness*. He makes that Truth he teaches *practical*. Man may work upon the *Understanding*, but cannot prevail with an obstinate *Will*.

These two are not to be parted. They that take the *one* without the other; as for Instance, the *Orthodox* ill-liver, and the fair-dealing *Heresick* or *Sectary*, they divide the *spirit*, and make as if he did his Work by halves. Whereas it may justly be fear'd, those that have but half his Guidance, have none of it at all, how specious soever the *Opinions* of the one, and the *Practices* of the other may be.

The *Spirit of Truth* may bear another sense according to the Propriety of the Hebrew, *Spiritus verus*, a true Spirit: for as our Saviour foretells us, there would be many *false Christs*, so there are many *false spirits* too abroad in the World; and therefore the *Apostles* advice was well given, and will be of use, as long as the World lasts: *Try the spirits*, Joh. 4. 1. There are *spirits of Error* as well as there is a *spirit of Truth*.

We have a many poor infatuated people, that pretend to the *spirit*, and venture to interpret *Scripture*, and to make *Scripture* too; so they give out that the same Spirit, that spake by the *Apostles* and *Prophets*, speaks in them, and desie *Ministers* as being taught immediately by the *spirit*.

But alas! let us bring them to the *Test*, Are their *Doctrines* agreeable to what the *Spirit* has delivered in *scripture*? Are not some of them quite contrary?

We may conclude then it is some other Spirit sure, 'tis not the *spirit of Truth*; for Truth cannot possibly contradict it self, seeing that one part of a Contradiction is necessarily false.

And are their *Practices* suitable to this holy good *spirit*? Do they in their Conversation shew forth the Fruits of this Spirit?

They



They do not indeed want for *Tongues, forked* ones too, to spit the venom of bitter Reproaches and Curses; and *fiery* ones, to disturb Governments, and set Civil States (if they could) in a Combustion. But those *clefts* and those *fires*, we may well suspect, betoken some other kind of Spirit than this *blessed Spirit* here, *who proceeds from the Father, and is sent from the Father by the Son*. Which is our next Subject to speak to.

Mat. 28. 19.

This makes out his *Authority*; ἐκπορεύεται, the word, our Saviour uses in his Commission to his Apostles, πορεύεσθαι, *Go and teach all Nations*.

He comes from the Father with Power, and the *son* sends him by special Deputation as it were in his room, and that from the Father with his Approbation; for the Father shall send him in his name, *Joh. 14. 26*.

And thus the *Holy Spirit*, besides his own essential Dignities, comes empowered and enabled for the Exercise of his Offices, and the Discharge of his Commission, with all the Power and Interest, the other *Two Persons* can give him.

He brings the *Broad Seal* of Heaven along with him, annexed to his *Credentials*; and has besides, the *Cacette* and privy Signet of the Blessed *Trinity* for his more private *Instructions*.

Nor is this to be thought any Derogation to his *Person*, or Diminution of his *Authority*, that he thus comes from one, and is sent by another, or rather sent by both (as *Christ* also was sent by the Father and sent by the Spirit too, *Luk. 4. 18*. so both sent by the Father, *Gal. 4. God sent forth his Son*, vers. 4. and *God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son*, vers. 6.) but this Concurrent Vote of all *Three Persons*, makes the *Embassie* the more splendid and august, and gives us the larger Assurances of the Love of God towards us, when we see the whole *Trinity* so busily concern'd in Contrivance of our Salvation.

This advances our *Faith* to the highest pitch, and settles the anchor of our *Hope*, and lays the most solemn obligations upon our *Love*, which being thus twisted with a three-fold Cord, cannot easily be broken.

Heb. 12. 9.

Jam. 1. 17.

Further, as he is the *spirit of Truth*, he is said to proceed from the *Father*, who is called the *Father of Lights*; and as he is termed the *Comforter*, to our great Comfort, he is sent and employed by the *Son*, who wrought our Redemption for us, and purchas'd us with his Blood; which Redemption the *Spirit* comes to make out to our Spirits, and to set his *seal* to the purchase by applying *Christ's* Merits, and assuring our Hearts.

Eph. 4. 30.

Nor is this all is here to be learnt, the *Mission* onely of the *Holy Ghost*; but, as all Antiquity has expounded it, the manner of his *personal Subistence* too, which is by the way of Procession, *proceeding from the Father and the Son*, as the *Nicene* and *Athanasian* Creeds tell us; from the *Son* as well as from the *Father*, against the *Macedonian* Hereticks. For in that the *Son sends him from the Father*, argues, that he proceeds from both; nor is he less or less oft call'd in Scripture the *Spirit of Christ*, then the *Spirit of God* the *Father*.

There is a kind of Intercourse and *Reciprocation* of actions among the *Three Persons* of the Blessed *Trinity*, (the *Son* in his divine Nature *begotten of the Father*, in his Humanity, *conceived of the Holy Ghost*, and sent by both as you heard: Again, the *Holy Ghost* proceeding from both *Father and son*, and sent likewise by both) and a kind of *subordination* too: (The *Father* being from himself, and acting from himself in the *Son* by the *spirit*; The *son* acting from the Father by the *Spirit*; and the *Holy Ghost* acting from them both;) and yet no superiority or inferiority in

in all this ; *their Glory being equal, and their Majesty coeternal.* And this for the Character of the Person.

We come now to open the Commission it self: *He shall testify or bear witness of me.* I have spoke somewhat already of this, where I explain'd why he is call'd the Spirit of Truth. I shall not trouble you with repetitions, but only shew how he bears this witness, and so draw to a Conclusion.

III.

*He shall testify of me;* that is, as it is express'd in chap. 14. vers. 26. *He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance;* and further shall seal those truths, he teaches, and puts you in mind of,

1. He was to teach them, by inabling them with the gift of tongues, that they might bear witness of Christ throughout all the World; and to instruct them, what further was to be done for the preaching of the Word, for the settling and governing of the Church, and the ordering of Ecclesiastical Societies and Affairs.

For that the Church of Christ is the holy Spirits Province, and that the Management of her Affairs, the establishing of Offices and Officers, the appointing of Ordinances, the power of the Keys, and the dispensing of Sacraments, is the proper business of his Superintendency, as we have partly shewn before, so may be made good from the very order and consecution of the Articles of the Creed, the third and last part whereof is acknowledged peculiarly to belong to Him, wherein having profest our faith in him, *I believe in the Holy Ghost,* immediately follows, *The holy Catholick Church, the Communion of Saints.*

2. He shall call things to your remembrance; wherein Christ seems to give order for writing the Gospel, no part whereof was penn'd, whilst he himself was upon Earth, or taken from his own Mouth, as it might have been; but was intrusted to the Spirits care, which was to come after, and so by his Assistance committed to Writing, not till some good time after Christ's Ascension; the Spirit bringing all things that were most material to their remembrance, all things that belonged to Faith and good Manners, and leaving the rest, matters of Government and Discipline, of Decency and good Order, much to the discretion of the Church, according to occasion, necessity and convenience and other prudential Circumstances; having set down only some general Rules, the Governors of the Church being by direction of that good Spirit, to make their deductions, and fit them to particular cases.

Thus S. Paul tells the Corinthians, *The rest, when he comes, he will set in order;* 1 Cor. 11. 34. and yet we read not any where, how, or in what order he did set them.

3. In the last place, which is not to be omitted, it being so suitable to our present business; he doth as a Witness, not only attest, but set to his Seal; and that in an especial manner at such times as this, when we are to partake of the dreadful Mysteries. A Communion day is his Seal day.

The Sacraments themselves are Seals of the heavenly Doctrine, and the holy Spirit virtuates them and puts strength into them, and supplies the outward Elements with inward Grace, and makes them truly available to the ends and purposes of their Institution.

To come to a Close then, and briefly to apply. Seeing that the Paraclete, the Comforter is come, and the Spirit of Truth is resident in the Church, and that this is the last method and course God intends to take with us, and that we are not to expect Apparitions of Angels, nor Voices from Heaven, as formerly; no more Instructions by Visions or Dreams, whatever

ver bold *Enthusiasts* and impure dreamers may fancy; no more the *Son of God* to converse on Earth, till his second coming to Judgment.

Let us then humbly and meekly submit our selves to the teachings of this *Blessed Spirit*, wait upon him with faith and reverence in his *Ordinances*, give heed to those he has set over us, learn at the mouth of his *Priests*, frequent the *Sacraments*, and pay due Obedience to the *Constitutions* and *Usages* of the *Church*: assuring our selves, that who forsakes the Priest, and flights publick Order, does not so much contemn the Wisdom of *Superiours* and the Authority of the *Church*, as he does with a high hand affront and despise and bid defiance to the power of the *Blessed Spirit*, and to the Majesty of the *Holy Ghost*: and is not very far from committing that unpardonable Offence, even *Blasphemy against the Spirit of God*, which shall never be forgiven neither in this World, nor in the World to come.

Mat. 12. 32.

Particularly, let Us, who are now approaching to the *Holy Table*, who mean to partake of the *Lords Body and Blood* exhibited in the *Eucharist*, address our selves to this *Comforter*; that he would accompany his own *Ordinances*, and by infusing *Virtue and Grace* into them and into us, make them effectual unto us; that as the *Spirit of Truth*, he would make out to us the *Truth* and Substance of those mysterious Representations, that he would prepare us with due Preparations, cleansing our Hearts by *Faith*, inlightning our Eyes, that we may discern the *Lords Body*, and powerfully applying to us the virtue and merit of *Christ's death* for the killing and pardoning of sin in us, and the power of his *Resurrection* to raise us to newness of life; that he would illuminate our *Understandings*, incline and overrule our *Wills*, purge and inflame our *Affections*, and sanctifie us throughout both in *Body, Soul and Spirit*; and finally, that he would bear witness with our *Spirits*, that we are the *Children of God*; and now in this *Sacramental* action seal the Promises and Benefits of *Christ* to our souls, and seal us to the day of *Redemption*: All which God of his infinite Mercy grant he may do, through our *Blessed Lord and saviour, Jesus Christ*.

Rom. 8. 16.

Eph. 4. 30.

To whom with *God the Father*, and *God the Holy Ghost*, the *Comforter*, the *spirit of Truth*, *Three Persons*, and *One God* be *Glory* now and for ever, *Amen*.



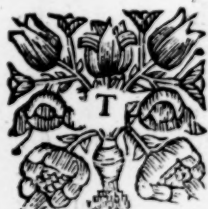
Upon the Holy and Blessed TRINITY.

*A Sermon preached at St. Peters Westminster, on*

TRINITY-SUNDAY, May 26. 1678.

I Joh. V. 7.

*For there are Three, that bear record in Heaven;  
the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and  
these Three are One.*



THE *Trinity of Persons* in the blessed Godhead, and the *Incarnation of the Word* the Son of God, are the two great distinguishing Marks and Characters of *Christian Religion*. The *Unity*, I say, of *Three Persons, Father, Son and Spirit* in one and the same Essence of the Deity, and the *Union of two Natures* Divine and Humane in one and the same Person of Christ, are the main Objects of *Christian Faith*; those Things, the belief of which does strictly and properly denominate us *Christians*.

These are Truths of supernatural Revelation, and herein lie the *Mysteries* of our *Faith*; whereas other things in our Religion, which seem to be of a meer *Moral* concern, come in some measure under the verge of *Reason*, and are, as to that, common to us with other Professions. So that those *Hereticks*, who have at any time (as there have been many) denyed or called in question either of these *Two*, they have in effect retreated back so far into *Heathenism*, and ought rather to be lookt upon at best as *Philosophers*, then as *Christians*.

I shall not out of *Epiphanius* present you with a *Catalogue* of those *Hereticks*; *Arrians, Photinians, Sabellians, Macedonians*, and the like; whose Names and Opinions, it were better, should be for ever forgotten, then raked up in a Christian Auditory; to give temptation to loose unstable minds to waver in *Fundamentals*, which if these Truths be not, there is nothing in our Religion Fundamental.

And yet to those unhappy Times have some of us lived, as to see those anciently condemn'd *Heterodoxies* afresh reviv'd, and with new Confidence maintain'd. And indeed it could not well be expected, that it should be otherwise; but that when the Hedge of the *Church-Government* was pull'd down, and *Schism*, which naturally is inclin'd to improve it self into *Heresie*, had got head; it could not, I say, be expected, but that all kind of Heretical Distempers should break in upon us.

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For there is that close Connexion between *Peace* and *Truth*, between the good *Order* and the *Doctrine* of the *Church*, that he, who breaks One, must think himself oblig'd, for his own security, to violate the Other. Besides that the new Masters of *Seperation*, however sound in *Doctrine*, when they had seduced People from the *Duty* they owed to the *Church*, could not rationally think that those people should be constant to them in that *Obedience*, which they themselves had debauched from their lawfull Superiors; but that being once gone out of the Road, they should wander on still in further Inquiries after the *right Way*, till they had quite lost all hopes of recovering it, *that is*, of ever coming back again to it.

This in those licentious times of *Usurpation* was no Wonder, since the Interest of the Usurpers lay in this pretended *Spiritual Liberty*. But that since our miraculous *Restitution* these Humours and Disorders have still bin continued, is the Wonder of every honest *Englishman*, and ought to be the Grief of every good *Christian*.

And yet (which I do not speak out of any animosity to any sort of Men, but only to represent the Danger of tolerated *schism*) there are Those among us, who think too meanly of our blessed Saviour, *the Man of Jerusalem*, as they call him, who in the drift of their Writings scarcely own the glorious *Trinity*; and who upon pretence of the *Light within them* would put out the saving Light of Scripture-knowledge.

It was this *Light* within them, that misled all those foremention'd *Heretics*. For, Sophisters as they were, calling the mysterious Truths of God to the Bar of their Reason, and finding they were not easily reconcilable to that false Rule, they were led on to question them; and at last in downright terms to deny them. Hereupon they saw themselves under a necessity of disparaging and laying aside the Judgment of the *Ancients*, who down along from Primitive times had constantly delivered these *Truths*; of slighting the Determinations of general *Councils*, made against their upstart *Tenets*, in vindication of those *Orthodox Truths*; and of putting new and strange *Interpretations* upon those Passages of *Scripture* it self, which asserted them.

'Tis true, that the Affirmations of *Doctors*, be they never so Primitive or Learned, and the Decisions of *Councils*, be they never so General or legally Assembled, do in themselves carry only the Weight of an humane *Authority*: but where any *Doctrine* (as these are,) is bottom'd upon express and clear Places of *Scripture*, according to the very *Grammatical* meaning of the Words; there the consentient Testimonie of pious *Antiquity*, and the Decisions of such *Assemblies* ought to be of great force with every well minded *Christian*: *Scripture* being not of *private Interpretation*. And such is the *Doctrine* of the *Trinity*, so expressly and clearly delivered in the Word of God, as we shall see anon; that who doubts is, must at once by Consequence deny *Scripture*, and renounce that *Religion* which It teaches him. Wherefore the *Arrians* of old and *Socinians* of late, seeing they were urg'd by the plainness of *Scripture* in these points, were forced to find out a way by *figurative Expositions* and other Evasions and shifts to elude it. So easie it is for any, who broach the worst of *Opinions*, to avoid *Scripture*; nay, to shelter themselves under the Words of *Scripture*, if they may but have the Liberty of imposing their own sense upon them.

Among all those *Passages of Scripture*, no One hath been more hardly dealt with by them, then This, which I have now read to you: *There are Three &c. and these Three are One*. For *This* doth so directly set down a *Trinity*

*Trinity of Persons* in the Godhead, that nothing can *Grammatically* or *Logically* be said against it. They say then, that these Words are *Supposititious*, and were foisted in by some *Trinitarian*, in favour of that Opinion; as being not to be found in some ancient Copies, and several of the *Eastern Translations*, *Syrick*, *Arabick*, *Aethiopic*; so that nothing can from this Place be inferr'd, they say, either for the Confirmation of the Doctrine, or for Confutation of its Adversaries; and One of them is so far lost to shame and learning both, as to cry out, *Nemo nisi impudentissimus aut indoctissimus negaverit*; that is, that none but a very Impudent or Ignorant person, but will grant that this suspected *Place of Scripture* ought to be of no Authority at all in this matter. And by this means they would fain raze out this *Record* of the Three Heavenly Witnesses.

It will be necessary for me therefore first to vindicate my *Text* from that Cavil; and I shall distribute my Answer to the *Objection*, that is made, into these four Heads briefly.

1. That this *Verse*, though left out in some, yet is found in many ancient Copies, and in all printed ones but one; which is an Argument, that it might rather be omitted in those that have it not, then inserted in those that have it.

2. That the omission of it in those Copies that have it not, might probably be casual, and proceed from the mistake and oversight of some Transcriber; who by taking off his eye, might skip this *Verse* and pass on to the next, they both beginning alike; *There are Three that bear witness*. And thus the fault of one *Transcript* might, as was usual before Printing, transfuse it self into several other Copies: and then possibly from some such Transcripts those *Translations* might be made; there being less care taken of them, then of the *Original* it self.

3. That if the different reading here were from Contrivance, the forgery lies most likely on the *Arrian* side: the *Arrians* having had greater Temptation to leave them out, then *Christians* had to put them in: whereas the *Orthodox* had enough to say out of Scripture besides, (had this *bit* out) as we shall shew anon. Accordingly S. *Jerome* and S. *Ambrose* charge it upon the Hereticks.

4. That as it was the constant sense of the Church before the Council of *Nice*, wherein the *Arrian* Heresie was condemn'd, to beleive a *Trinity*; so S. *Cyprian*, who wrote before *Arrius* was born, read this very place as we do. Says our Lord, (they are his words) *I and the Father are one; and again of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost it is written, Et hi tres unum sunt; And these three are one.*

Having cleared the Words from that Prejudice, they have lain under; our next Business will be to make out their *Coherence* and Dependence upon the Context.

The beloved Disciple who is more plain and positive, more sublime and lofty in describing the *Divinity* of his Master, then any of the other Writers are, in the 5. *verse* of this Chapter speaks of Christ's being the *Son of God*. He goes on in the *sixt* and says, *This is he, that came by water and blood*; alluding to that historical passage at his Crucifixion, when his precious side being gored with the Souldiers spear, *Water* and *Blood* gushed forth. *Water* an Embleme of his purity and innocence; *Blood* the Character of his Sufferings and patience: or rather if you will, *Water* the sign of one Sacrament, *Blood* of the other; and it is the *Spirit*, says he, that beareth witness, and the *Spirit* is Truth. This he repeats in the 8. *verse* next after the Text, *There are three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit,*



the Water and the Blood. Onely by way of Parallel and for Illustration sake, he brings in this 7. verse, that As there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost; so there are three that bear witness on earth, the Water, the Blood, and the Spirit: Three above and Three below.

We have in these Words to observe somewhat of speculation; That there are three in heaven, and that those three are One; and somewhat of Practice; that they bear record, to wit, to the Messiahship and Divinity of Christ.

In the speculative or Doctrinal part, we have two things to fix our Meditations upon.

1. The Trinity of Persons in the Godhead; There are three.

2. The Unity of Essence. And these Three are One.

In the Practical or Applicatory Inference, there will be occasion partly to Instruct and Confirm us from that Record, in the faith of the Messiah; and partly to Exhort us to some Duties suitable to that Record. The first will take up our present time.

1. For the Speculative part; the Doctrine of a Three-One God being matter of Faith and a Mystery of Religion, that far transcends the reach and powers of natural Reason, to give an account of; I shall not go about to borrow Arguments out of the Schools of Philosophy or Oratory, but content myself with those clear Instances, which Scripture the instrument of supernatural Revelation has set down. For upon Subjects of this nature we are not to speak without book, but to take the Bible along with us and to consult holy Writ, that we may discourse of God becomingly, that is, in that Language as he himself has been pleased in his Word to make discoveries of himself.

1. A Trinity of Persons. And here the very word Trinity is questionable, as being not scriptural. But if there be Three, we cannot but acknowledge the thing imported by that word Trinity. And if these Three be One, *ἐν, one thing*, then they are *ὁμοούσιον, consubstantial*, of the same essence and nature. For it is no less lawful for Divines then for Philosophers, to coin terms suitable to their Conceptions and to the nature of Things. And thus in like manner pious Antiquity doubted not to style our Saviour Θεάνθρωπος, God-Man; and his blessed Mother Θεοτόκος, Deipara. For though these Words are not found in Scripture, yet the sense and meaning of them is. There are Three then, *tres* not *tria*; not three different Things, but three distinct Persons. Three that bear record, and that is a personal action. Three by three several names; Father, Word and Holy Ghost.

We shall first Explain this Mystery, and then endeavour to Prove it.

1. The Explication will serve to shew, how these Three are distinguished each from other.

1. By manner of their Subsistence, *τρόπος ὑπάρξεως*. The Father of himself alone, the Son of the Father alone, the holy Ghost from both Father and Son. So then the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Ghost either of the other Two. There is *alius & alius*, though not *alind & alind*; a distinction of Persons, though no difference of Essence.

2. By personal Properties: The Father begetting, the Son begotten, God of God, the holy Ghost proceeding. The Word, the Product of the Eternal Mind, coessential and consubstantial to the Mind that begets it; and the holy Ghost, the Spirit of Love, by which the other Two are united; for so Christ himself says. I and the Father are one, that is in the unity of the same Spirit.

3. Even by outward Operations, *ad extra*, though not exclusively. The work of Creation being more peculiarly ascribed to God the Father, that of Redemption to God the Son, and that of Sanctification to God the Holy Ghost. So the Church has in her Catechism determin'd it, where giving an account of the Creed, she teacheth the child to say; *First, I learn to beleive in God the Father, who made me and all the World; Secondly, in God the Son, who redeemed me and all Mankind. Thirdly in God the holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me and all the Elect people of God.*

2. Secondly; The Probation of it, drawn from Scripture and Fathers, the most authentick Interpreters of Scripture, those especially who lived nearest the Apostles times,

Now as to God the Father, as he is the Father or Maker of all things, in which sense the Word Father is taken essentially (as they term it,) it is confest on all hands; but then it must be acknowledg'd, that it is taken personally too, for God the Father, as contradistinct from the Son; and that is the importance of it here, as he is the Father of our Lord Jesus, so often call'd.

'Tis the Concern of the other Two, that lies mainly in question; the divinity of the Word and the personality of the holy Ghost. Of these therefore we shall treat.

1. Together or in common, jointly with the Father.

2. Asunder and apart, each of them by himself.

1. First; Jointly with the Father, there are several Testimonies in Scripture, where all Three are mention'd.

1. In Baptism; in that, as when our Saviour himself was baptized, all Three shew'd themselves; whence Athanasius bids them, that doubt this Article, go to Jordan; and S. Austin makes this descant upon that passage, *Pater auditur in Voce, Filius manifestatur in Homine, Spiritus Sanctus dignoscitur in Columbâ.* So in the very Form and Institution of that Sacrament, we are baptized, *ἐἰς τὸ ὄνομα*, into the name, that is, into the faith and profession of all Three; the Godhead of each Person being the Object of a Christian faith.

Mat. 3. 16, 17.

Mat. 28. 19.

2. In the solemn form of Benediction, where every Person is severally named with a particular and appropriate Indearment. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen. First the Grace of our Lord Jesus, as that which reconciled us to the Father, and procured us his Love; and then the Communion or fellowship of the holy Ghost, by which we are united to the Father and the Son, as they are united betwixt themselves by the same Spirit; or rather, as some render it, the Communication of the holy Ghost, whereby we are made partakers of that Grace and Love.

2 Cor. 13. 14.

3. In the Apostles swearing by all Three; that being an act of Worship, belonging to God alone. He, as he saith in one place, *Before God I lye not*; so in another he says, *I say the truth in Christ, I lye not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the holy Ghost.* Which forms of speech I do make as little scruple of calling Oaths, as S. Paul did of using them; since in Christ and in the holy Ghost is neither more nor less than by Christ, &c. that is, a calling them to witness: and though we are forbidden to swear at all in ordinary Conversation and upon frivolous occasions; yet that a man may *gravi de causâ* and for the solemn attestation of a great truth, the Apostles example has put it out of doubt.

Gal. 1. 20.  
Rom. 9. 1.

Mat. 5. 34.

4. In our Saviours Promise of sending the holy Ghost, Joh. 15. 26. *Whom I will send unto you from the Father*, where to be sent as well as to send argues per-

personality. Now he, who is sent, to wit, the *Holy Ghost*; and he, by whom he is sent, to wit, *Christ*; and he, from whom he is sent, to wit, the *Father*, must plainly be *three distinct Persons*.

And of this Judgment were the *ancient Fathers*, I mean those who flourished before the *Arrian* Heresie first sprung up.

Not to mention the *Doxology* all along us'd in the Church, which was lookt upon as an Apostolical Tradition, and is still kept up; *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*. In the *first Age*, *Clement of Rome*; in the *second*, *Justin Martyr* in a Treatise of the holy and coessential Trinity, *Athenagoras*, the other *Clement of Alexandria*; and in the third Century, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, and his Scholar *S. Cyprian*, whom we quoted before, were in their several Writings asserters of this Doctrine of the Trinity. So that it was not brought in, but confirm'd against Hereticks by the Bishops and Doctors at *Nice*, who therefore call it *olim traditam Ecclesie Apostolicam fidem*, the Apostolical Faith deliver'd of old to the Church. If any one desire further satisfaction in this, I refer him to the Annotations of the Learned and Reverend Dr. *Hammond* upon this place, who has there at large made out the primitive Antiquity of this Doctrine.

Indeed of so ancient a standing is this Truth, that in the time of the *Old Testament* there wanted not some indications and glimpses of it. There, as there are continued Promises and Descriptions of the *Messias*; so there are expresse places to prove his Divinity, as *Esai. 6. 5.* where he is called *the strong God, the Father of Eternity*: and *Jerem. 23. 6.* where he is styled, יהוה צדקו *Jehovah, or the Lord our righteousness*, and *Zach. 6. 7.* where God himself calls him *the Man my Fellow*, as being equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead; though inferiour to the Father, as touching his Manhood.

And the like might be observ'd though more obscurely of the *Spirit* also.

Gen. 18. 2.  
Gen. 19. 24.

To this consideration of the Trinity some refer the three *Angels*, that appear'd to *Abraham*; and after two of them to *Lot*, when the Lord rain'd down fire from the Lord.

Gen. 1. 1.

Nor have some of the *Jewish* Writers themselves forbore to give some such hints, in their way of picking out Mysteries out of *Letters*: as that אלהים *Elohim*, the name of God, a plural Noun, may as well denote a plurality of Persons, as the Majesty of One; and that join'd with a *Verb* singular, as ברא אלהים, *the Gods created*, that is, one God in three Persons; where also the three letters of the *Verb* point out the Three Persons, ברא. though asking a *Jew* once about it, he laugh'd at it as a conceit, and answered me with one of his own, more *Jewish*, than the other, אין בו מין that is, *There is no sense in it*: and I must confess, I am not overfond of such *Cabalistical* tricks, especially where we have a surer word to trust to.

The *Talmudists*, another sort of them, whether unwittingly or designedly, write the sacred name יהוה, with three *Jods*, sometimes inclos'd with a Circle. It looks as if they meant to expresse a Trinity of Persons in the Identity of Nature. For what other mystery or meaning they had in it, I cannot tell.

Nor was the *Heathen* world altogether ignorant in this kind; Beside, that the number *Three* was sacred and mystical, whence τριζ ἀπαντα, *Three makes all*; Νῦν γὰρ λόγος, the *Understanding* and the *Word* are familiar



miliar terms with *Trismegistus* in *Plato*, and *πνεῦμα*, the *Spirit* no stranger to some of those Writers; by which they understood *Anima Mundi*, the Soul of the Universe, the Lord and giver of Life, as he is called in the *Nicene Creed*; that prolifick Spirit, which at first Creation fluttered and brooded over the *Abyss*, that *Chaos* and mass of matter, which was design'd for the production of all kinds of Creatures, *Gen.* 1. 2.

But enough and perhaps too much of this, and somewhat, you may think, beside my purpose, who promised to confine my self to Testimonies of *Scripture*.

We have spoken of the *Two Persons jointly* with the *Father*: we are now to treat of them *separately* and apart; inasmuch as each of them has those *Names* and *Titles*, those *Properties* and *Perfections*, those *Works* and *Operations*, that honour and *Worship* ascribed to them severally, which belong to God alone.

Should I go about to make a full Collection and a large Recital of these things, it would take up more time, I fear, then your patience would afford me. I shall therefore at present insist but upon one or two, and leave with you a brief Intimation only of the rest.

*First* for the *Word*, the Son of God; he is call'd as you heard before, by one Prophet, the *Strong God*, and *Jehovah* by another. But let us hear what our *S. John* saith, in the beginning of his Gospel. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* The *Word*, that is, *Christ*. That is undeniably plain. *He was in the beginning*; he had an existence from the beginning, before he came into the flesh: and *he was with God*, with God the Father, that God whom all the World acknowledges; this shews his Personality; and *the Word was God*; that evinces, that though he were personally distinct, yet he was essentially the same. And this very *Word* in the 14 vers. *ἐγένετο σὰρξ*, became flesh, by assumption of humane Nature he was made Man, which before he was not, when in the beginning he was God with God; and *he dwelt among us*, *ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν*, he pitcht the Tabernacle of his residence on Earth; for it alludes to that which the *Rabbins* call *שכינה*, the Majestick glory of God; and so it follows; *and we saw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten Son of God*; which Glory of his discover'd it self in the Doctrine which he taught, in the Miracles which he wrought, and in the Innocence of his life. And in respect of these Glories, *1 Tim.* 3. 16. it is said, *Without controversie great is the Mystery of Godliness, God was made manifest in the flesh*, and even in the lowest ebb of his Humanity, the Apostle, *1 Cor.* 2. 8. calls him the *Lord of Glory*: *They would not*, says he, *have put to death the Lord of glory*.

Again, *Act.* 20. 28. it is said, *the Church of God which he purchased*, *τὴν ἑαυτοῦ αἰματι*, with his own proper blood, which cannot be meant of God the Father, but of the second Person, who was Man as well as God, and suffered death for our Redemption.

Further, which is a clear convincing proof of Christs Divinity, *Rom.* 9. 5. speaking of Christ, he adds, *who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen*: which was a solemn Form of acknowledgement usual among the *Jews*, wherein the people answered the Priest, giving glory to the eternal true God; and in imitation of this *Jewish* Custom, as a learned Interpreter supposes, the people in the Christian Church were wont at the naming of the Gospel to answer, *Glory be to thee, O God*.

In like manner the name of God is given to the *Holy Ghost*; as appears by comparing the 3<sup>d</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> vers. of *Acts* 5. where *Peter* tells *Ananias*,

*nias*, that by lying to the *Holy Ghost*, he had not lied to Men, but unto God. So that which in *Esa.* 6. 9. is, *The Lord said*, *Act.* 28. 25. is, *The Holy Ghost spake*; and that which in *1 Cor.* 3. 16. is, *The Temple of God*, is, *Ch.* 6. *vers.* 19. *The Temple of the Holy Ghost*; and He is call'd, *1 Pet.* 4. 14. *The Spirit of God, the Spirit of Glory*; as *Christ* by *S. Paul* is called *The Lord of Glory*.

The same may be said of divine *Attributes*; as *eternity, omniscience, omnipresence*: of divine *Operations*; as the work of *Creation*, the power of *Miracles*, the *raising of the Dead* at the last day: and lastly of acts of divine *Worship* due to God alone; as *believing* on them, *praying* to them,  *blessing* in their name, &c. which are ascribed to the *Son*, and to the *Holy Ghost* alike as to the *Father*. All which proves them to be God equal with the *Father*.

And thus we have done with the first part of the *Doctrine*, the *Trinity* of Persons; *There are Three*.

II. We come now to the other part, the *Unity of the Essence*: and these *Three are One*, that is, of one *Essence*. What *Christ* had said of himself, *I and the Father are one*, being here, to prevent all mistake, affirmed of the *Spirit* also; that all three Persons, *Father, Word, and Holy Ghost* are one.

What some demand, that the being *One* of these *three witnesses in heaven* should signify no more, then that which is said of the *three witnesses on earth* in the following verse, that they agree in *one*, is like the rest of their absurdities.

For who sees not a great deal of difference betwixt these two expressions, *ἐν ἑνὶ, they are one*, and *εἰς ἓν ἐστίν, they are to one* purpose, which we render, *they agree in one*? If no difference had been intended, what need the style have been varied?

Besides, the Parallel betwixt the heavenly and earthly *Witnesses* is made in respect of their Testimony and the Number of Testifiers, and was not to hold in other circumstances: so that those *Three* above are *One*, not only in the Consent of their Testimony, as those below are also; but in *Unity of Nature* too, as those others are not.

This *Unity of Nature* consists in this, that all three Persons are *Consubstantial* or *Coeffential* together, and that they alike partake of all the glorious Perfections, and essential Dignities and Privileges of the Deity; that *their Godhead is all one, their Glory equal, their Majesty coeternal*; and that *in the Trinity none is afore or after other, none greater or less then another*; as *S. Athanasius* hath excellently exprest it. And surely whosoever is aggrieved at his *Creed*, and thinks the *Holy man* has impos'd too much upon our Belief, as necessary to Salvation; I cannot but think, that such an one gives a shrew'd suspicion of an unsound Principle, which cannot well endure an *Orthodox* test of Christian faith. I hope I speak the sense of the *Church*; (I desire so to do) who having appointed this *Confession* to be used in her Offices upon solemn Days, we must suppose our selves oblig'd to pay an entire Veneration to it.

Deut. 6. 4.

The *Jews* have often that Text in their mouths against Christians; *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord*. We say the same; there is *one God* in the *Unity of Nature*, notwithstanding the *Plurality of Persons*: for *though each person be by himself God and Lord, yet they are not three Gods or three Lords, but one God and one Lord*. For as we are on one hand so to mind the *Unity of Essence* as not to confound the Persons; so on the other hand we are in that manner to consider the distinction of Persons, as not to divide the Substance.

We

We have hitherto dealt with Authorities of *Scripture*, as was meet; a word or two for offering some reasons, at least, why *Reason* is not of proper use in this argument.

1. Then in general we say; that whereas the Doctrine of Christianity consists partly of *Mysteria fidei*, partly of *Præcepta morum*, as the *Moral precepts* of our Religion are perfectly agreeable to humane Reason; so the Mysteries of it, though they are above our Reason; yet are not against it.

Here we are to walk by another rule: This is business for *Faith*, not for Reason: *Tu disputa, ego credo*; says the Father. And *Faith* is a higher Principle of demonstration than Reason; as being *ἡ ἀποδείξις τῶν ἀφανῶν*, the evidence of things not seen.

Heb. 11. 3.

Those then, who would have the *Mysteries of Faith* squar'd according to Reason, loose the Mysteries and destroy our Faith, and indeed give an affront to divine Reason, in which the Mysteries are founded, and to which humane Reason ought in all reason to submit itself.

And such is the Doctrine of the *Trinity*; it is a *Mystery*, and to be embraced with *Faith*.

2. It is highly Rational, that God in his Nature and manner of Being should not be comprehended with our Reason. We may apprehend something of him, but cannot comprehend him. Could we do so, he were not God, whose high Prerogative it is to be *Incomprehensible*.

Nothing can fully understand him, but Himself, who being *Infinite* in his Nature, cannot be conceived but by an infinite Understanding, that is, his own.

And if we, poor Creatures, cannot give account of the Motions of those glorious heavenly Bodies above us, of the ebbing and flowing of the Water before us, of the blowing of the Winds about us, of our own Spirit within us; if the composition of the least Atom puzzle whole Schools of *Philosophers*; if God be unsearchable in all his ways, what arrogance were it in us to pretend to fathom the depths of God with the short line of our shallow Reason?

3. It is but Reason for us to believe, what God hath plainly and expressly reveal'd of himself, though the Thing reveal'd, as to the matter of it, be above and beyond reason.

For though Reason require to be satisfied in the Probability of the Thing related; *Faith*, which is the right Christian Principle, grounds it self upon the Credibleness of the Relator.

Hence it is, that the divine Authority of *Scripture* is the main and only ground and buttress of *Christian Faith*, which therefore readily entertains any thing, that is there plainly revealed, as this of the *Trinity* is.

It is satisfaction enough to an humble Understanding and a devout Soul, that God has said it: who, as he is of an infinite Wisdom, and cannot be deceived; so he is of infinite Goodness, and will not deceive.

4. As to the business of the *Trinity*, though it far exceed our Reason, how Three can be One, and One Three: yet there want not natural Instances, to illustrate it.

As that there are three Faculties of the reasonable Soul, Understanding, Will, and Memory; which yet do not essentially differ, but do altogether constitute and complete the Mind of man.

That from the same Substance of Fire there is a threefold emanation of flame, heat, and light.

That every man is made up of three Ego's, has three Selves in him, as appears



appears in the reflection of Conscience upon actions of a dubious nature: whilst *one* self accuses, *another* self defends, and the *third* self passes judgment upon what hath been so done by the man.

'Tis a familiar, but not altogether impertinent resemblance of this Mystery, taken from three several *Cups*, filled out of one and the same Spring or Fountain of Water.

Nor was it an ill account, that an Idiot or meer Natural gave of his faith in this *Article*; when he demonstrated the possibility of three Subsistences in one Essence, by making three *pleats* in his Coat, which though they differ'd from one another, yet still it was the same Cloth.

I will not affirm, that Ignorance is the Mother of Devotion; but sure an honest simplicity, and a devout Ignorance is worth all the *Scholaſtick* subtlety in the World.

These, I confess, are mean unworthy comparisons. *Whereunto*, says the Prophet, *will ye liken God?* And indeed the greatest *Schoolmen* and most eloquent Preachers must, whatever we are, if we have any Humility with our Piety, acknowledge, that we are all Idiots, when we come to treat of these Mysteries. Nor can we say or think ought of God in this kind, without a Preface of Reverence and asking pardon.

It is sufficient for us, and most suitable to the Mystery, so to conceive, so to discourse of God, as he himself has been pleas'd to make himself known to us in his Word.

Now to God the *Father*, to God the *Son*, and to God the *Holy Ghost*, Three Persons, and One God, be all Praise, Honour and Glory. *Amen.*

# A Sermon upon St. *MICHAEL'S* Day,

*Preached at St. Peters Westminster, Sept. 29. 1674.*

St. Matth. XVIII. 10.

*Take heed that ye despise not one of these little Ones;  
for I say unto you, that in heaven their Angels do  
always behold the Face of my Father which is in  
heaven.*



Have heard it complain'd, that the *Church* has fill'd her *Calendar* too full of *Holy days*, that is, they mean of Idle days, to the great detriment of poor *Tradesmen* and *Labouring* people, should those days be strictly observed; and I know there are not wanting some, who out of a peevish discontent, against all ancient *Usages* as well as present *Orders*, look upon our *Festivals* and *Fasts* as paltry unscriptural Institutions. But the *Church* has sufficient ground both of *Scripture* and *reason* on her side to back her *Authority*, and to justify her *Appointments* in this as well as in other kinds.

First then, to begin with what was last Objected; were we to look either for the *Presidents* and *Patterns*, or for express *Rules* and direct *Commands* in *Scripture* alone, to which they pretend we are solely bound for the regulation of Gods publick Worship in all particulars of it, we might look long enough and be always to seek; such a *Platform* being no where to be found as actually prescrib'd, or indeed ever intended by *Christ* or his blessed *Apostles*. It is enough that we have *general Rules* there set down, and *primitive Example* before us, whereby to guide our selves, and whereunto every particular *Church* may and ought in all things, as near as may be, to conform her *Practice*, for the preserving of peace and good order according to the standard of uncorrupt *Antiquity*.

Upon this bottom stands the whole *Oeconomy* of Gods *Church* among us; to this all our *Administrations* are by very natural consequences reducible. And for any *Dissenters* to deny the *Churches* order and disposition in her services upon this account, that these things in every particular are not by way of strict command to be met with in *Scripture*, is, if they would pursue their unreasonable *Logick*, to over-throw the *Lords day* it self, *Childrens Baptism*, all *Church Government*, and even the very *Ministry*, which owe their validity to the like deductions. Nay, which is far worse still, and which I dread to observe, though we see daily experiments of it, so improvable is *schism* into *Heresse*, so easily does any one Error, yielded to, draw others more dangerous after it; it were to call in question the glorious undivided *Trinity*, the *Consubstantiality* of the Son with the Father, and other *Mysteries* of our faith; because the very words *Trinity*, *Consubstantial*, and the like, are not recorded in holy *Scripture*.

You see then, how a nice Pretence to a stricter Piety, and a misguided Zeal, from a mistaken veneration of *Scripture*, may not only lead people to publick disturbances of the *Churches* peace, but also to the certain prejudice of all divine *Truth* prove, as it has done in this our Age, an Inlet to all kind of *Heresies* and *Impieties*.

The *Church* then upon these grounds, according to that *liberty* Christ left with her, for the ordering the externals of Worship, after the abolition of the *Jewish Sabbaths* and *New Moons*, did at first by her *example* recommend to succeeding ages the keeping of the *first day* in the Week, and afterwards by her *Authority* injoin it for a day of solemn meeting and publick service of God; and I think there's no good *Christian*, but thinks himself oblig'd even for this reason to keep it. And that Christians might not be more slack and remiss in their acknowledgments to God, then the *Jews* were in theirs; that they also might go to the *House of God* with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that keeps holy-day, *Psal.* 42. 4. besides the *Resurrection of Christi*, from which we have all our weekly Solemnities, she thought fit to commemorate other *Instances* of that great work of our *Redemption*, he wrought for us, in his *Nativity*, which *Justin Martyr* in his time calls *Βασίλεις ημετε*, the *Queen-day* of the year; in his *Conception*, in his *Forty days Fast* and *Temptation*, in his *Passion*, in his *Ascension*, and the *Mission of the Holy Ghost*. To these *Anniversary Commemorations* of our blessed Lord and saviour himself, which are as so many *Articles* of our *Faith* scattered throughout the Year, she added *Feast days* in memory of his *Apostles*, *Evangelists*, and some few others of his *Saints*, whose praise is in the *Gospel*; these all such righteous ones, as ought ever to be had in remembrance, for Gods praise and our imitation.

I confess, in process of time, this Custom of commemorating the dead, grew to some excess; when, for the encouragement of others to a constancy in their Religion, they paid these extraordinary honours almost to every ordinary *Christian*, who had behaved himself valiantly, or suffered in the Cause of *Christ* and his *Gospel*, till at length, what was *Piety* at first, proved in some few ages extravagance and *superstition*.

Let this then, which was the *first* complaint, be charged, as justly it may, upon the *Romish Church*, which still keeps this Burden upon her subjects backs. Herein appears the Moderation of our Mother, the *Church of England*, that as she has thrown off the Corruptions of *Popish Doctrine*, and the Superstitions of their *Worship*; so she has not over-loaded us with her *Ceremonies* and *Impositions*, having in this matter, whereof we are now speaking, confin'd her self to the eminent *Saints* of the *New Testament*; so that, who complains of her Institution of *Holy days*, must at the same time accuse his own Indevotion, and answer his own *Objection*, when he makes it, with a blush at his remissness, who cannot afford so little time, as is required of him, for Gods publick Worship; wherein would he upon these occasions shew more diligence, I dare say he would find better success in his ordinary Employments; this being certainly none of the worst ways of laying out and improving ones time.

The *Church* then having confin'd her choice of *Anniversary Feasts* within the compass of *Gospel-story*, and to the most eminent *Instances* of our *Redemption*, and *Examples of Piety*, as she was pleased to set aside one Day in the Cycle for the commemoration of *All Saints* whatever, that God might have the due honour for all his *graces* in all whatever his *servants*, who have departed this life in his faith and fear: so it became her prudence and piety not to neglect that other Order, which makes up so considerable a number among the *Blessed ones*, I mean the *Holy Angels*: as  
being



being a great part, as I said, of the *Church Triumphant*, and indeed so nearly related to us, and interested in us, that, as 'tis believed by some, those empty rooms, which were made by their fellows desertions, are to be filled up with *Holy Men and Women*, who shall be *Heirs of Salvation*; whom therefore we are told, *Heb. i. 14. the Angels are sent forth to attend upon and minister unto*; and who therefore shall in the future state be *ἰσάγγελοι*, like or equal to the Angels.

Luk. 10. 36.

And further there appears yet all reason, they should not be forgotten by us, upon a *Gospel* account, to the advancement of which, they have severally by Gods appointment been so serviceable: as *St Gabriel* in the first promulgation of our Saviours birth, *St Michael*, as you heard in the *Epistle*, in his conquest of the *Dragon*, the Churches grand enemy, &c. Nor only so, but they do still, even the chief of them, attend upon us, and upon God in our behalf, to do us all good offices, as appears in my *Text*, which is the close of that portion of Scripture, which therefore the *Church* assigned for the *Gospel* of the day, *Take heed that ye despise not, &c.*

I shall not trouble you with the *connexion* or *dependence*, the words have with the foregoing; or give you any further *account* then what may immediately and directly belong to them; but shall take in other things as they may fall in, and offer themselves by the way.

In the words we have these two general parts.

1. A strict Prohibition; that we *despise not the little ones*: and that usher'd in with a severe charge by way of *Caveat*; *Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones.*

2. A solemn Reason given for the Prohibition; that those *little ones* have *Angels* for their *Guardians* and *Attendants*, and those *Angels* none of the lower form, but the most eminent *Favourites*, who continually stand in Gods presence, and do always *behold his face*.

And this reason back'd with our Saviours own authority and sacred word; *For, says he, I say unto you, that in heaven their Angels do always behold the face of my Father which is heaven.*

In the *Prohibition* we are to consider,

1. Whom *Christ* means by these *little ones*.

2. What it is to *despise* them; by which means we shall understand the full importance of the *Sin* here forbidden, and of the contrary *Duty* commanded in this place.

By *little ones* then are to be understood in the *first* place and most properly *Children*, according to Scripture use of the word, where we find often mention of *Men, Women, and their little ones*, that is, the children of the family, as also the *Pronoun* here directs us, *one of these little ones*, relating to the *Child*, whom *Jesus* had placed in the midst of them, *ver. 2.* and proposed to them as an Example of humility, to take them off their ambitious designs of greatness, telling them, *vers. 3.* that unless they lower'd those aspiring thoughts, altered their minds, and shap'd their course another way, and became as *Children* in their innocence and unconcernedness, they could not enter into the *Kingdom of Heaven*, they could not truly and indeed be his Disciples, or deserve the very name of *Christians*: and then in the fourth verse, decides their question, that *Whosoever should humble himself, as that little Child* was humble, that should free himself from the hankering desires after worldly Gain and secular Grandeur, and shew himself as indifferent to the things of this life as *that Child* was, he should prove the bravest *Christian*, and the noblest *Saint*, the greatest Person in the *Kingdom of Heaven*.

Theſe

Mar 10 14.

These are those whom *Christ* gives order in the *Baptism-Gospel* to be admitted and brought to him; for of such, says he, *is the kingdom of heaven*; it belongs to them, 'tis theirs; and it is made up of them, 'tis of such; Wherefore that Charity is but reasonable which our *Church* declares to Infants after *Baptism*, that is, after they are brought once to *Christ*, that if they die before they have committed any actual Sin, they are undoubtedly saved.

Mar. 9. 36.

And though those children there were Infants, yet *this child* here we must suppose of that age and growth at least, that he could understand and go of himself; for 'tis said *Christ* called him to him. Nor does the parallel place of *St Mark* make at all against this, where he says *Christ* took him in his Arms: for by *ἐναγκαλισσάσθαι*, the word which he uses, that is, *ulnis complecti*, can be meant no more, then that he hugged and embraced him.

By *little ones* or children then I mean all such, as are within the compass of that Age we call *Childhood*, which to what year of life it extends, as some *Authors* differ, so I shall not determine, but think it may be allowed to reach so far, till one arrive at some competent mastery of *reason*, or at least as long as he does not abuse his reason by the wicked practice of some known sin; for in this case 'tis an old Rule, *Malitia supplet aetatem*, and desperate villany forfeits the privilege of pleading *Childhood*; which we must suppose by that character our *Saviour* gives it, to last only so long as childish simplicity and innocence lasts.

Further, that *little ones* here are properly children, the *Vulgar Interpreter* seems to intimate, who as he renders the *μικροί*, *pussilli*, so he translates *παιδιον*, *parvulus*, both which words of his do denote *littleness*.

But then *secondly*, we ought not so to confine the word to *Children*, as to exclude elder Persons, Men and Women, from sharing in the *Honour* and Advantage, which attends it; such, I mean, as are of a child-like temper and disposition, that humble themselves as *this child* here was humble, that are poor in spirit, low and mean in their own opinions, and little in that esteem, which they have of themselves, and perhaps the World has of them too. For that *Christ* intended Children for the *Emblems* of such humble pious Souls, we partly shewed before; nor shall we now go about farther to prove it; since 'tis a thing readily acknowledged by all Interpreters.

Nor only such as are *humble*, which the best and greatest of *Christians* may be, nay indeed must be, and are such, if they be so; but also all of lower degree and inferior rank, all underlings, whether in place, or in knowledge, or in gifts and graces; those that are weak in faith, erroneous in judgment, scrupulous in conscience, sliding in practice; all such as 'tis either our duty that we should, or there is any the least probability that we may do them any good, by informing their minds, or reforming their manners, by confirming their faith or resolving their conscience; all such as do or may belong to *Christ*, if there be but any hope they will be docile and tractable, so as to receive benefit by our applications; are in charity to be comprehended under the same term of *little ones*.

And indeed in reason too: for *little* and *great* being relative terms, there being nothing that is absolutely one or the other, but as it is compared with other things either greater or less: it follows that all persons in the world to whom a man may be any way beneficial, as to the salvation of their Soul by those advantages which he has above them, of Gods grace and spiritual knowledge and the like; may in respect of that man not improperly be called *little ones*. And 'tis that mans duty not to despise any one of them; which is the next thing we are to explain.

2. What

2. What it is to *despise* them; *καταφρονεῖν*, to think meanly of them, to esteem them below their real worth, or to esteem them at least below our selves, from *κατα*, as it signifies *deorūm*, and *φρονέω*, *sentio*: to Undervalue them, and make no account of them; to slight and scorn them in comparison of our selves, and to declare this contempt we have for them in our gestures, words or actions; to use rude and insolent behaviour towards them, to receive them with little or no respect, to keep at distance from them, and not vouchsafe them so much as a good look or word; to swagger with our *authority*, and vapour with our *learning*, and yet (which was the reason of Gods intrusting us with these his gifts) doing no good with one or other; to laugh and jeer at others *persons*, to expose their *simplicity* or *ignorance*, and make sport with their *faults*; to reproach their *errors* and *miscarriages*, instead of amending them by gentle *admonition* and wholesome *advice*; in a word to shew our selves proud and haughty in our conversation with them: for there's no one *despises* another, but must think too well of himself.

This *Pride* then, as the most unchristian-like Vice, being diametrically opposite to this fundamental grace of *Humility*, and that which on the one hand renders all those Advantages, which *Superiors* have, useless and unsuccessful, whilst on the other hand it alienates the minds of *Inferiors* from their duties, who never pay a hearty obedience, where they find themselves *despised*; and by this means enervates and hamstring the very bands of Society: I say this *Pride* is that sin, which is primarily and principally struck at in this prohibition.

Yet let me not be mistaken, as if all lay upon the *Superiors* part. For as we are here forbidden to *despise little ones*; so certainly *little ones* themselves are much more obliged not to despise their *superiours*: and in case of contempt, *governors* are obliged to stand by their Authority, and not to bear the sword in vain. Wherefore, as to such persons, as St Peter tells us of, 2 Ep. 2. 10. that *despise government, presumptuous, self-willed people that are not afraid to speak evil of dignities*; that charity which we owe to them cannot be better exprest, then in the execution of Laws and just Rebukes. 'Tis true, they are not to be *despised*; no, themselves will tell us, they are not despicable: but they are to be looked after, and by all possible means to be recovered to their obedience and their wits again.

Rom. 13. 4.

There is, I confess, a difference to be made, as St Jude has observed; of some, who have out of no ill meaning gone aside, *compassion* is to be had, they are to be pitied and used tenderly; but others that are more obstinate and refractory, to be *saved with fear*, and snatcht out of the *fire*, that is, to be more roughly handled, for their own and the publick security; (for *schism* is a *fire*, which will in time eat out the bowels of Church and State.)

Jude vers. 23.

It is not impertinent here what the same St Jude tells out of a Tradition, after he had quoted that very place of St Peter, *speaking evil of dignities*. Why, says he, *Michael the Archangel, when contending with the Devil, he disputed about the Body of Moses, durst not bring a railing accusation against him*; But these, says he, *speaking evil of things which they do not understand*. Suppose now, as he seems to state it, that these men were *Saints*, as they love to call themselves; nay *Angels*, and the Church were, as some of them have not feared to call her, *Antichrist*; their railing Language and contemptuous Carriage would not become them. But for these, that separate from the Church, as those there did, to slight her

Jude vers. 9.

Autho-



Authority, and to speak evil of the *Apostles*, *Bishops*, and *Governors*, as those did, is such an unreasonable piece of Confidence as deserved from both the *Apostles* the severest censure.

There is another word in the *Context*, somewhat *Synonymous* to this of *despising*, that is to *scandalize* or *offend* these little ones. 'Tis true, *scandal* is a word so generally misunderstood and misapplied, that 'tis hard for one to do any thing, be it never so harmless, but some or other will be offended at it. But we speak here of *offence* given, not taken. For he that *takes* offence, where no *offence* is given, 'tis he must bear the blame of the *scandal*. We are not to *offend* them then, that is, not to give them any just occasion of offence. Σκανδαλον the *Greek* Grammarians tell us properly signifies that little piece of Wood in a *Mouse-trap* or *Pitfall*, which bears up the Trap, and being toucht lets it fall; but I suppose has naturally a more general notion, to signify any thing that one *stumbles* at; that which gives one a fall, or makes one halt or limp. From σκίζω, σκιδω, to *halt*, σκανδαλον, as from κυπλώ, κυβώ, κύμαλαρον, and some others the like; wherefore 'tis rendred sometimes a *stumbling-block*, that which in *Hebrew*, עָוָה, and *St Peter*, 1 *Ep.* 2. 8. expresses by another *Greek* word πρόσκομμα. It denotes then any thing done by us, whereby another is hindered in his course of piety, in his way to heaven. So that to *scandalize* or *offend* is to discourage and dishearten them, to grieve and sadden them, to afflict and vex them, to stagger and make them doubtful in their thoughts of Religion, and by our advice or example to call them off, and mislead them from virtuous courses, and to discourage others in sinful practice.

Rom. 12. 16.

And as we are forbidden here to do this, so *è converso*, our Duty is implied, that either in our particular place, or upon the general account of *Christianity* we do so far, as in us lies, promote and set forward the salvation of all men; that we give these *little ones*, all the Countenance, Encouragement, and Assistance we can; that we bear a true love to their *Souls*, and a due respect to their *Graces*; that we humble our selves, and condescend to their low estates, and comport with their *infirmities*; that we pity them in their *errors* and *failings*, and apply to them according to their *necessities*: that we *instruct*, *exhort*, *reprove* with all gentleness of Spirit: that we be as serviceable to mankind as we can; that we do all the good we can, especially in those places, where Providence has cast our Lot; In a word, that we be good and kind and merciful to our Power, to all men that stand in need of us, as we with God should be gracious and kind and merciful unto us. To neglect these things is to *despise* these *little ones* and our own duty together.

Thus much of the *Prohibition* it self: which, to make it the more effectual, is edged with a Caution; *Take heed that ye do not*, ὁρᾶτε, *see you do not*: which form of words, as it discovers *Christ's* tender affectionate regard to these *little ones*, and his great care of them; so it bespeaks our aptness of *despising* them, and the danger of so doing.

Mat. 18. 5.

1. It shews *Christ's* most concerned love for them, as if he had said, *Have a care how ye despise*, how you slight or wrong any one of these my dear children, my beloved *little ones*: Whatever account the World may make of them, they are high in my esteem; there's none but such as these, that have the same character of *humility* and *innocence*, that shall be admitted into my Kingdom of *grace* here, or that of *glory* hereafter; and be you assured, there's none of you all shall come thither, unless you first humble your selves and become like them. Further, if ye have any love or regard to me, shew it in your respects to them; for he

he that receives, that entertains, and is kind to one of them, I shall accept and reward his kindness, as if he had received me. Mat. 18. 5.

2. It intimates our great *aptitude* and proneness to this sin of *despising* others. See ye do not implies, we are naturally too too ready to do it. And this upon a double account, that the *little ones* themselves are apt to be despised, and that others are too apt to despise them.

1. These *little ones* are liable to Contempt; their low condition brings them into a publick disesteem. Those that are *ἡumbleis*, of a *simple* and undisguised conversation, of an humble and lowly carriage, of an innocent and harmless deportment, are *ἐὺκαταφρόνιστοι*, lie open to all kind of affronts and injuries. *Semper bonus homo tyro*, Honest natures are always to learn; never secure from the attempts of Insolence, against which well-meaning Innocence is so far from being a Preservative, that it invites malicious Attacks at once, and engages for their Impunity; when an Oppressor finds he has to do with one, that has neither *power* to resist, nor *will* to revenge. Every one goes over the gap that's broken down, and what lies under-foot is easily trampled on. *Chi pecora sū fa*, say the Italians; *He that makes himself a sheep, the Wolves will eat him*; and to be *Innocent*, is a ready way, as the World has alway gone, to become a *Prey*.

2. Men are too too forward to despise them. *Pride* is a Vice natural to Mankind, and that *self-love*, which makes us think highly of our selves, teaches us to entertain as low thoughts of others. The *Philosopher* tells us, that *Riches* make men *ὑβριστεis*, insolent and contemptuous, despisers of others. What he says of *Wealth*, is as true of *Wit*, *Learning*, any thing, we fancy our selves blest with above others; nay even *Grace* it self, when 'tis turned into wantonness, is not free from being thus abused. Instead of using Gods *Gifts*, indeed his *Trusts*, to his Glory and our brethrens Good, we do too often, too many of us, God help us and forgive us, misemploy them to his Dishonour and others Hurt, and make those things, which he intended for  *blessings* and *advantages*, to become *Curses* to our selves, and *Disadvantages* to the Community we live in; whilst we foolishly imagine, we lay a fair foundation of our own vain-glory in despising these *little ones*, in disparaging and diserving our fellow-Christians. This may be observed, that where *great Parts* are accompanied with a *great Spirit*, unless it be well ballasted with a prudent Piety, men commonly grow either *remiss* and negligent of that duty they owe to these *little ones*, or *tyrannical* and insolent in the performance of it.

Jude 4.

3. But then, Thirdly, This *Caveat* imports extreme Danger. *Take heed*, that is, look to your selves. 'Tis easie to offend in this kind, but 'tis as perillous; like a slippery precipice, where 'tis very difficult to keep ones feet, and more dangerous to catch a fall. Our *Saviour* could not meet with a *Metaphor* near hand, near home, fit to express the Horror of his indignation and resentment. The four *capital Punishments*, used by his own Countrymen the *Jews*, were not sufficient to dress his frightful Figure with; he borrows his expressions from the neighbor *Syrians*, whose language he used, whose custom it was in some cases to *drown* Malefactors. *He that offends one of these little ones*, says he, *it were good for him, that is, it were better for him then to do so, to have a millstone hanged about his neck and be drowned in the depth of the Sea*, *ἐν τῷ πελάγῳ τῆ θαλάσσης*, where the repeating of the same thing in two *Synonymous* words much aggravates the sense. Thus *Aristophanes* his Scholiast informs us, that the *Grecians*, when they inflicted this penalty, put a weight upon the Criminals neck. And this no ordinary weight, appointed by our Saviour to shew how extraordinarily himself

Mat. 18. 6.

is offended, when any of his *little ones* are; but *μύλος ὀνικός*, *mola jumentaria*, such a *mill-stone*, as was usually turned about by the help of Asses, which might sink the guilty person into the depths of Hell; however his other eminences might have lifted him up to Heaven, as 'tis said of *Capernaum*.  
Mat. 11. 23.

II. Thus you see that this *Prohibition* has prevented us in our second general part, having it self afforded us sufficient *reasons*, for our Care; that we beware how we *despise* or *offend* any one of these *little ones*. And that,

1. Because *Christ* takes what kindneses or unkindneses are done by us to any one of them, as done to himself.
2. Because we are all too apt of miscalrying in this point, what through their *Weakness*, what through our own *Pride*.
3. Because this contempt offer'd to *Christ's little ones* will be severely and signally punished; and there's a great *woe* will attend him by whom the *offence* comes; for though it *must needs be that offences come*; yet Gods wise *Permission* of them does not hinder his just *Vengeance* upon them, as not laying any necessity upon the Will of man, and consequently not lessening his *guilt* or his *penalty*.

Mat. 18. 7.

Yet beside these *Reasons*, which are implied in the *Caution*, give me leave to touch at *That* which is express'd in the Text; and I shall but touch at it. For I say unto you, that in heaven their *Angels* do always behold the face of my father, &c.

Where first, from the *Authority* of the Speaker, I must premise, that *Christ*, who was the Oracle of Truth, who never spake any thing in vain, did assuredly intend something, by his saying, *I say unto you*. What it was I shall not pretend to divine; The least that can be supposed, is this, that what he was to utter with this solemn form of Confirmation, must be a Truth of undoubted Certainty, and more then ordinary Concernment.

In the *Reason* it self, before we shew its connexion with the foregoing *Interdiction*, it will not be amiss to present you with two *Positions*, which do naturally arise hence.

1. That all *pious* and *humble* persons, especially *children*, before they come to wilful acts of sin, have their *Angel-guardians* to attend them. This is up and down by several *testimonies* and *instances* of Scripture so apparent, that I shall not abuse your *patience*, by mistrusting your *judgment*, to quote any of those many passages. Whether those *Angels* be one or more particularly assigned some to one person, some to another; or whether they do attend promiscuously, so as to relieve one another in one common charge, I shall not take upon me to determin. Much more do I disavow the *worshipping* of them, or addressing prayers to them; because their *Ministration* is one of Gods Secrets, which he has reserved to himself, on purpose, perhaps, that our *curiosity* might not prove a temptation to lead us to *superstition*. They are things we have not seen; the *Apostle* tells us, and so are our Souls too, and yet if we be but rational, we are sure we have them. Their *Angels*; they have *Angels* then.

Col. 2. 18.

To say St *Peter's Angel* was a Messenger sent from him, is a frigid evasion. It was his *Angel* sure, that brought him out of Prison, and guided him in his way; and the Maid that came to the door, knew *Peter's Voice*, and the people within knowing that he was fast in Prison, did, from a common-



common-received opinion among the *Jews*, I and *Christians* too, presently conclude, it was his *Angel* that might imitate his Voice.

Nor onely do they guard us in Life, but after Death (sometimes at least) give their Attendance. Two of them kept Centry at our *Saviours* Grave, and *Michael* himself, as ye heard even now, disputed with the Devil, like a scholar, and like a *Souldier* too; (for he contended with him) about the body of *Moses*, to preserve his sacred Reliques, as may be supposed, from being abused to Idolatry. This the *first*.

2. That those *Angels* thus employed are not *infimi subcellii*, of the lowest Rank, but those of the chiefest Order, such as do always behold the face of God. For though that phrase may denote all those Blessed ones, that kept their station, whom *Christ* came to confirm in their happy state, as well as to Recover man out of his lost condition; upon which account it is, that the *Angels* are called upon to worship him; yet it doth more properly, according to the language of the *Eastern Courts*, signifie the *Angels of the presence*, the *Grandees of Heaven*, as I may call them, stiled by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, πρῶτοι ἄγγελοι, *Angels of the greatest Power*, of which number the *Jews* reckon seven, from that of *Zach. 4. 10.* where they are named the seven eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth: and *Raphael* in *Tobit* is said to be one of these seven. This evinces the high favour and dignation, the honourable care and regard which God has for these his little ones; that his greatest *Angels* he thinks not too good to wait upon them. And this also proves and makes good the connexion.

Heb. 1. 6.

Tob. 12. 15.

We must not despise one of these little ones, be he never so mean, because the *Angels*, which have the Care and Oversight of them, have a constant and free Access to God, to make their complaints, to present their requests, and to receive power to redress the grievances, and avenge the quarrels of their Pupils. These *Angels* of theirs will appeal to the Court of Wards in Heaven against those, who injure them here on Earth; neither will they suffer their Trusts to be damnified, without ample reparation or exemplary punishment of those that do them wrong.

Now consider, that whereas 'tis the *Devils* property to be the Accuser, (whence also he takes his name, διαβολῆς ἢ διαβάλλω,) how sadly it must go with them, who force the good *Angels* to that office?

Rev. 12. 10.

That they are said to behold Gods face διαπαντός, that is, per omne tempus, continually; that is no hindrance to, their Attendance on their several charges (since they cannot be in heaven and on earth at the same time) for that they may do at some certain times, without long absences too. Besides Heaven is always open to them; and further Almighty God, as he is Omnipresent, is so much taken with an humble heart, that he keeps Court and makes his residence there, no less then in the highest Heavens, the seat of his glory.

Lend me your patience, whil'st I conclude all with a short Application.

And first let me bespeak Those, whom God has made Parents of children, and Guides of youth, you whom he has intrusted with the Oversight of his little ones, either in Church or State, you are in some sense their *Angels*, their Guardians. Take heed of despising or setting light by your charge. Do not act contrary to their heavenly *Angels*, and give them occasion to complain of you their earthly ones. Act as they

do. They wait upon us, do us many good offices, and yet conceal themselves, as it were on purpose to avoid our Acknowledgments, leaving them all to God, who employs them, and when they have been proffered Worship, have refused it. Let not your high Place dazzle or transport you. Use your *abilities* and *interests* to Gods Honour and publick Good, and overlook them, when you have done. The meaner thoughts we have of our selves, the higher shall we be in others esteem, I and in *Christs* too. Let us mind our *duty* more then our *dignity*, and suit our selves in discharge of our Trusts to all *capacities*, to all even the meanest *conditions*. Know that though ye are *Angels*, yet you are to become as *children*: and the only way to make you truly great, is to be *humble*. I shall not be so vain, as to wish impossibilities, that I might return into my *childhood*, that I might again sit in those *Scholars* forms before me; I would not live over the same life again, to see the same evils I have seen, or to do the same I have done. But I do heartily wish and pray to God, I may for the remainder of that short time I have to live, live the life of a *child*, and make *Innocence* and *Humility* my constant study and practice.

1 Cor. 14. 20.

One word to you, and I have done, ye that are the children of *Christ*, his beloved *little ones*. Take ye heed of despising your selves. You know *Pythagoras* his Lesson, πάντων δὲ μάλιστα ἀισχυρὸς σαυτοί. Have a great reverence for your selves. Remember the *Angels* are about you. Do not *scandalize* and *offend* them either with open peevishness or secret wickedness. Be sure ye, as the *Apostle* warns us all *ἐντρέφειν τὸ νηπία*, to be *children* still in any thing that's naught, and not buy knowledge with the loss of innocence. *Wilful acts* of sin, over and above that rude Invasion they will make upon your yet tender Consciences, will discourage your *Angels* Attendance, and drive them away from their Stations, wherein they are set to guard you. Secure your present Innocence with further progress in Piety and experimented dependences upon Gods grace, which you that have not yet resisted and abused it, may be sure to have multiplied upon you, to preserve you from falling into sin and running into danger. *Angelicus juvenis senibus satanizat in annis*, A young Saint, an old Devil, was a Proverb, as worthy *John Gerson* observes, invented by the Devil, to blast blooming Piety. May the early blossoms of your *childhood* be ripened in due time into seasonable fruits of *Manhood*, to Gods glory, and the benefit of our *Church* and *Country*; which that we may all in our several places faithfully seek and endeavor, may he grant us his grace through *Jesus Christ* our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

# A Sermon upon S<sup>t</sup> JOHN BAPTISTS Day,

Preached at Whitehall before the Family,

June 24. 1667.

S<sup>t</sup> Matth. III. 2.

*Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*



THE Text is it self a Sermon, preach'd first by the Holy Martyr of this Day, John Baptist, the Forerunner and Harbinger of our blessed Lord, at the very commencement of the Gospel; *In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea. And saying; Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* This afterward repeated by our Lord himself *in terminis*, when John was cast into Prison, Mat. 4. 17. and by him the same form was continued in the Apostles Commission, when he sent them forth to preach, Mat. 10. 7. Accordingly S<sup>t</sup> Paul gives that account of himself too, that he was made a Minister to preach Repentance, Acts 26. 20.

And this is to be my business now; For though the several passages of the Saint, his Midsummer-Nativity, his Hermitage, his habit of Camel-hair, (yet not of Camlet) his Diet Locusts, ἀκρίδες, (whether Grass-hoppers, or tops of herbs) his Dignity, (the greatest, and yet below the least) his טבילת or Baptism, honour'd by our Saviour, yet re-baptiz'd by S<sup>t</sup> Paul; the character of his doctrine, and lastly his Martyrdom; how his courage in reproving sin, taken notice of in the Collect, ruin'd him at Court into bliss, whilst Herod, out of a wickedly tender Conscience to a paltry Oath, was content the Damsels light heels should spurn off the Prophets head. Though these Instances, I say, would afford matter for a learned Inquiry and a florid Discourse; I shall willingly pass them by, and in compliance rather with the Necessity of our sinful Times, than with the History of the Holy-day, spend my hour in a serious and pious meditation upon Repentance; *Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* In which words you have —

Mat. 11. 11.  
Acts 19. 5.

Mat. 14. 9.

1. A Duty commended, or, if you will not take it so, a duty commanded. *Repent.*

2. A Motive, or Argument inforcing that duty. *For the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*

The Duty, a duty of absolute and indispensable necessity; Repentance.

The Inforcement as powerful, as the duty is necessary; the near approach of the Kingdom of Heaven.

1. For the Duty. Repentance is reckoned One, and That the first of the six Principles or Fundamentals of Religion, Heb. 6. 1. And thus these Words seem to have been dictated by the holy Spirit purposely for an Intro-



Introduction to the Christian doctrine; *Repentance* being the very Inlet, the earliest and most requisite preparative for Christ's coming, and the preaching of the Gospel, which are frequently in *New Testament* Stile meant by the *Kingdom of Heaven*.

In the handling hereof I shall, waving all questions and distinctions of the *Schools*, only take what the very word here used will fairly allow me; μετανοεῖτε, *Repent*, most properly to be rendred, *Change your mind*: And so *Hebr. 12. 17.* 'tis said, *Esau found no place of Repentance*. 'Tis generally applied to *Esau's* final impenitence; where though the thing possibly is not mistaken, the place is, which the margin of our *English Bible* renders *he found no way to change his mind*, that is sure his Father *Isaack's* mind; who, after he had given away the blessing to *Jacob*, could not be persuaded by all *Esau's* importunate cries to recall his word, to *repent* what he had done, or to alter his mind.

To discover more fully the nature of *Repentance* from this word, and to shew how this *change of mind* is gradually wrought in us, give me leave to prosecute the *Grammatical* sence and *Scriptural* Use first of the simple Verb νοεῖν; *to mind*, then as 'tis compounded with the *Preposition* μετὰ, μετανοεῖν, *to repent*, or *change his mind*.

The simple Verb νοεῖν, *to mind*, has four usual notions, importing as many several operations of the mind, that do all make up and compleat the whole duty of *Repentance*.

*To mind* then in general is actually to apply the mind to any thing; and that is

1. To think and *consider*, to take notice, to perceive and understand. Saith *St. Paul* to *Timothy* upon an Extraordinary business; Νόη α' λέγω, *Consider*, or *Mind what I say*; take notice of it, and consider it well, 2. *Tim. 2. 7.*

2. To discourse and argue, to reason and *debate* the case, to cast about and examine one and the other side; and so we are oblig'd to love God, ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας, *with all our mind*, with the exercise of our whole reason, *Luke 10. 27.* and his Essence and attributes are clearly seen; how? *Rom. 1. 20.* τοῖς ποιήμασι νοηθῆναι, *being understood*, and by good Logical consequences fetcht from his works of creation.

3. To judge and determin upon the point, to *resolve* the question, to come to a peremptory conclusion, and to a full period and issue upon the whole matter, to a rational and thorough conviction, and to a round and full persuasion; so *Heb. 11. 3.* πίστις νοηθῆναι, *By faith we understand, that the world was created*; that is, we are by the evidence of faith, as clearly and fully perswaded of it, as if we had seen it done with our eyes, as if we had demonstration for it. Thus *Rom. 14. 5.* Let every Man be fully assured or perswaded in his own mind or judgment. And so the compound μετάνοια & πείθεσθαι, *to repent and to be persuaded* are *Luke. 16.* in the two last verses of the Chapter, taken to be all one.

4. To mind or to have a mind, to be cordially affected, to take to heart, to *ingage* the will and affections: Thus 'tis used *Job. 12. 40.* νοησθαι τὴν καρδίαν, *to understand, or mind with the heart*; when the heart closes with the understanding, and our Knowledge becomes hearty and practical, and so proves a saving knowledge; when the Will, the Soverain of our actions, and the whole Commonalty of our Passions and Affections, and all our Faculties and Members are by one common consent unanimously ingag'd in the service; when the Soul can say with *Joshua*, I and my House will serve the Lord; when the Will of man, like Nature, acts ad extremum virium, exerts her utmost strength, with the most violent efforts

efforts of sincere purposes, and constant resolutions, and vigorous endeavors.

When we can thus *consider*, and *debate*, and *determine*, and *engage* for God and his wayes, we are fairly advanced onward in our way to Repentance.

But alas! we have erred and strayed from Gods ways, and gone out of our own too. Here's a *Particle* then that will set us to rights, and put us in our way again; *μετὰ, post, trans*: whence *μετ' αὐτοῦ*, *Repentance* signifies an After-thought and a Change of mind.

1. As Repentance implies an *After-thought*; when we come to our second and better thoughts: *Resipiscere*, after some errors and miscarriages to bethink our selves again, to resume the matter into debate once more, to give the cause another hearing and bring it to a fair tryal, and reversing the former Judgment to pass sentence a second time upon our selves and our lives to better purpose; to draw in the Will with her hand-maids to a compliance with more prevailing reasons, and to imploy the whole man in prosecution of nobler designs and sublimer ends, then yet we have lived for, and with renewed resolution and fresh diligence to redeem our mispent time, and make amends for our former loyterings.

2. As it imports a *Change of mind*; to have quite other kind of considerations about us, then formerly we have had; to free our selves from Sophistical delusions, and being inlightned by the Spirit to have a clear judgment, and know all things, 1 *Joh.* 2. 20. and by rational deductions to set our principles aright; to weigh them in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and have the stamp of the Spirit struck upon them; when the bent and tendency of our own Spirits, the byas and inclination of our Souls lies and is carried clearly Heavenward; when finally the stream and current of our Wills and Affections is quite turned another way, like the rivers in the South, from the creature to the Creator, and our very Natures and Constitutions are in a manner wholly alter'd, that we are become altogether new creatures in Christ, created unto good works.

Yet that Christianity may not be mistaken, we are not to understand this *Thorough-change* wrought in us, as if it were a substantial change. *Grace* doth not destroy or imbezil, but correct and amend, adorn and imbellish, improve and perfect *Nature*. We have the same Reason and the same Affections still left about us, as we had before our conversion; but now they are rightly plac'd and better imployed about objects, mainly convenient and suitable to the excellence of our Faculties and glorious future Expectations. *Religion* has no principle of *Stoicism* in it, to pare off the passions and sling them away as useles; it does not require of us to unman our selves or to be less Men then before. It does not take from us the bravery of our Spirit, nor the vigor of our Parts, nor the activity of Body, nor the cheer of Countenance, nor the emotions of our Minds in passionate resentments of things that happen; but by well disposing and managing all these upon right Objects, to good Ends, and by lawful Means, according to the rules of Christ's doctrine, it makes us highly serviceable to the glory of God, and the benefit of his Church, and the concerns of our King and Country, as well as to our own eternal Happiness.

Let us again go over these Stages, and *first* for Consideration.

*Consider*; I and consider again, and consider otherwise then we have done.

L

1. Consider we then in the *first* place *Our selves*, our own nature;  
What

What we are, and what we shall be; what we are made of, and what we are made for; how frail and how excellent a piece of work we are, made up of a mortal body and an immortal soul.

The generality of men are naturally Infidels in this point; not to be persuaded either of their Mortality here, or Immortality hereafter; of a Life to come ever to commence, or the present ever to have an end. We pamper the body and lay out all our time and expensive cares, *Ut bene sit lateri*, &c. to provide for back and belly, to go fine, and fare deliciously, and live at ease; and in the mean time neglect and starve our better part.

Psal. 104. 26.

Thus are we mistaken in our selves, putting a high value upon the shrine, and paying all our devotions to the Flesh, when Θεός ἐν σαρκε, its heavenly Inmate, the poor Soul gets no respect from us: as if we had, what the *Natural Philosopher* saies of some creatures, *animam pro sale*, souls given us only to keep our bodies from stinking above ground. Thus preposterously we live, and wear out our lives in a gross home-mistake, not considering the excellent Faculties of understanding and Reason, we are indow'd with, nor to what end we were sent into the world thus furnished, as if we were put here, as the *Leviathan* in the great waters, only to take our pastime.

Joh. 4. 24.

2. Then consider we *God* in his Nature and in his Will. He is a Spirit, and will be worshipt in spirit and in truth, and will not be put off with outside performances, with customary and formal services.

Consider the veracity of his Word in his Threats and Promises, and the rationality of his Commands.

Consider his severe Justice upon obstinate sinners, and his tender Mercy towards the penitent.

Consider, that his abused patience will turn to fury in the end. If his Mercy may not reclaim thee, his Justice will destroy thee: Why dost thou then in a continued course of sinning live in defiance of his Justice, daring him to his face, and in contempt of his Mercy, standing out all his gracious proffers? Rather with the Apostle 2. *Pet.* 3. 15. let us account, that the long suffering of our Lord is salvation.

3. Next consider the nature of *Sin* in its ugly selfe and it's direful consequences. 'Tis a monster of none of God's making. Look on it, not as it has all along beguild thee with false appearances of Pleasure and Profit; but pluck off those Vizards, and view it in its natural deformity, and in its own affrighting shape: as 'tis a deviation from the rule of right Reason, an aberration from thy chiefest Good and utmost End in all thy actings; the depravation and defilement of Body, Soul, and Spirit.

Take notice, whither it leads thee, whither it will bring thee at last; even in this world, what Miseries and Mischiefs proceed from it, and then the Losses and Pains, are to be for ever undergone in the next world for these pleasures of sin for a season. Let the sad after-reckoning make thee avoid and beware its Inticements.

After this view of sin in general, consider *thy own* heinous *Sins* and high Provocations, with all the aggravating Circumstances; Whilest thou perhaps, like a careless and desperate Debtor, *mala fidei debitor*, seekest only how to come into debt, never takest care how to get out; what a Score hast thou run up? how hast thou inflamed thy Reckoning? Stop a while in the career of thy Lusts and consider; Stand, and lay thy hand upon thy heart, and thy heart upon thy ways; and say, 'Tis enough; the time I have already spent in the service of my sins, is more then sufficient.

4. From thy Sins turn thine eye upon thy *Saviour's sufferings*: Look upon Christ bleeding on the Cross, and making an atonement for those sins of



of thine; and wilt thou sin on, and forfeit the benefits of his Death, and the merit of his Passion, spending the value of that Blood, wherewith thy Soul was purchased in idle oaths, and widening those Wounds by thy profaneness, that were opened for the cleansing of thine iniquities? Look upon Him whom thou hast peirc'd, and weep over him; and thus the sight of Christ in Faith will ground and help thy Repentance.

Zach. 12. 10.

5. Lastly from present things look forward to the *Novissima*, what shall be hereafter,

Consider thy self a Dying, as thou must one day, thou knowest not how soon, and shaking hands with the world, what friend hast thou provided for the next life?

Consider the Judgment to come, the great day of accompts, when the thoughts of all hearts shall be laid open, and every action of our lives scand.

Consider the joys of Heaven, and th rewards of a pious life to a blessed eternity; and whether 'twil not be very well worth thy while to order thy life to that end.

Consider the torments of Hell, which are to the wicked as unavoidable as they will be unsufferable.

And upon the back of these considerations, in fine consider the absolute Necessity of being saved, and consequently the indispenfable Obligation that lyes upon thee, to the practise of this duty we are now upon, of Repentance, and such a repentance as may be unto Salvation.

After thou hast thus considered, *Debate* the case between thee and thy Soul, and debate it over again; and if thou hast been mistaken, debate it another way, with an impartial reason and clearer arguments.

Let not the licentious Practises and the atheistical Discourses of this last and worse Age carry thee aside; but examin the reasons of those bold Assertors, and bring them to the test,

The sum of thy debate is this. There are but Two can pretend to thee; God and Satan, Grace and Lust; Two ends of all our lives, Heaven and Hell.

Argue with thy self, whether God or the Devil is to carry thee, One must. Which has the better Title to thee, which the fairer Plea to make for thee? He that made thee and would save thee? or He that betrayed thee at the beginning in thy first Parents, and now goes about seeking to devour thee? which dost thou prefer, and look on as likely to be the better Master? Whose Service the more eligible? Whose Wages the more desirable? Which is to be chosen, (for thou hast thy choice) Death or Life? Heaven or Hell? endless Joys or everlasting Burnings?

An easy choice, one would think, for a Rational creature to make; did not the God of this world, by a strange deception of sight, darken and blind the minds of most people, and by his perverse reasonings and fallacies overthrow our understandings, and with an imaginable Sophistry lead the generallity of mankind hoodwink'd and blindfold to their destruction.

To go over these things again then, with a more particular scrutiny and examination.

1. Argue then, whether it be not much safer and more prudent, to trust God then to confide in his and thy utter enemy the Divil. God is of unquestionable Truth in his Promises, as he is of undeniable Justice in his Precepts: Our Duty is easie and rational, our Rewards unconceivably great and infallibly certain; The Divil is cruel in his Tasks, and false in his Payments.

Q

2. Then

2. Then debate, whether God's service *even in this life* be not infinitely more delightful, then the service of Sin. Whilst folly weans her self in the pursuit of vanity, all the ways of Wisdom are ways of pleasantness.

What ever some say of Religion, an evil Conscience certainly is the most Melancholy thing in the world. I appeal to any one that has made trial; whether the Peace of conscience and Joy in the holy Ghost, the spiritual Tranquillity and undisturbed Serenity of mind, which always accompany good actions, are not far to be prefer'd before all the Jollities in the world; whether the ravishing Contents of the Inward man be not a thousand times more valuable, than all the brutish Pleasures our Senses can bring us in?

Besides, that all the sweets of Sin end in bitterness (this Serpent carrying a sting of remors in its taile, and leaving it in the conscience) and that they are so short-liv'd, that they perish in the using: These sensual treatments, for that little time, wherein they tickle the senses, are like the Prodigals husks, nasty and flashy, having nothing of Honour or solid Advantage in them, and leaving nothing but a fruitless shame behind them. So the Apostle states it, *Cui bono?* sais he, *What fruit had you of those things, whereof you are now ashamed?* Rom. 6. 21.

3. Next, weigh with thy self, whether all the World can counterbalance and make amends for the loss of thy *Soul*? If she miscarry, all is gone, Thou art a lost man for ever, and this very Self of thine, whom thou hast all thy life long gratified and humoured, is by thy inordinate self-love and Sinful complaisance, sadly betraid to utter ruine, and everlastingly quite undone.

Oh then, have some mercy at last for thy Self! take pity upon thy poor Soul, render her as the Redeemed one of God; do not palter her away, that cost Christ so dear; make her thy darling, the chief of thy cares, and the principal of thy joys; the sum total of all thy concerns.

Methinks I hear the poor *Soul* of some desperate sinner, bespeaking him in such mournful language as this.

Oh tyrant man! why dealst thou so unkindly by me the friend of thy bosom, who am thy life, and ought to be thy Joy; who am more to thee then thy self; who am thine own self, [*ἡ ψυχή σου,*] upon whose well or ill doing thy eternal state and everlasting welfare depends! Why dost thou unworthily degrade me from the dignity and purposes of my creation, by inflaving me thus to temporal concerns, and making me the captive and vassal of my implacable enemies, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil! Oh that *Pythagoras* were true, that I might by the benefit of a Transmigration, be releas'd from this inhuman bondage and thralldom of serving wicked Man; and rather be lodg'd in the imbraces of some brute *animal*, which being placed below the Sphere of Reason, acts regularly, according to its natural Instincts, and transgresses not the Laws and Priviledges set by its righteous Maker! Now, I who am by descent allied to Heaven, who was designed a companion for Angels, Gods Agent here on earth, the Heiress of glory and sole Empress of all thy faculties and actions; am basely employ'd in the vilest offices, turn'd into thy scullery, immerst into carnality, put to prog for the flesh, and do drudgery to thy body, loaden with the chains of the guilt of thy Surfets and Intemperances, and reserv'd for direful expectations, as if that glorious Alliance, I have to celestial Spirits, were to serve only for an aggravation of thy foul miscarriages, and to be the everlasting reproach of thy punishment: whilst my Immortality stands me in no other stead, then to capacitate me for a never dying death.

Tell

Tell me, should thy *Soul* stand forth, and present her bright self before thee, as the Angel before *Balaam*, and charge thee with these evil Usages; what could'st thou return to such just Expostulations, which to all eternity will unanswerably be set home upon thee?

Further debate, whether the silly transient Pageantry, all the splendid Varieties, and the glittering tinsel Glories, and the empty husky Delights of this fleeting World are to come into any comparison or competition with the eternal weight of Glory, which is prepar'd for them that serve God in this life?

2 Cor. 4. 17.

Whether the ways of sin for a short time here be so gainful or pleasant, as to deserve to be bought with the dear purchase of endless misery hereafter? and whether the Reprobates have not a very hard and sad bargain of it, to be repented to all eternity?

To be short; Whether it be not better to get Heaven at any rate than Hell? to go to Heaven maim'd, with thy right Hand and right Foot cut off, and thy right Eye pull'd out, then having all thy members, all thy carnal satisfactions about thee, go to Hell? especially when Heaven may be had at as cheap a price: many a poor soul taking more pains, and being at greater cost for perpetual torments, than some of the blessed Saints have paid for their durable Felicities and interminate Bliss.

Mat. 5. 29, 30.

Upon this *Debate*, wherein I have with as much plainness and clearness, as I could, stated the Case; because on it lies the main stress of our conversion; 'twill be no difficult thing, one might conceive, to *Determine*, which is our third Stage.

Yet because a man may come up so far toward Repentance, as to know very well and *understand* the Advantages of a pious life, and the great Hazard he runs in a sinful course; and to *debate* and argue with himself, and state his case aright; and yet, for all that, be negligent of the Main, and in spite of good Premises still maintain a wrong Conclusion; and this either out of weakness of judgment, being Disabled by the debauchery, vicious Customs and sensual Pleasures, or hardened either by wilful Impenitence or by God's just Judgment, that seeing they do not see; or out of a dilatory laziness and lothness to go about this necessary important and (as all changes are) troublesome and painful Work; they put off Repentance with shifts and evasions, and bid her come again to morrow; harping upon that of *St. Austin* before his conversion, *Non modo, Domine*; Not yet, good Lord. I shall endeavour, by removing the Impediments, to stir you up, and excite you to a speedy *Determination*, with some awakening Motives.

Mat. 13. 13

1 First, That *the longer thou stayest, the more difficult the work will be*. Thy Sins increase the while, thy Graces impair; the burthen grows greater upon thee, and thy strength less; and Thou thy self wilt be still more unresolv'd and indispos'd every day than other,

But suppose to morrow may serve turn; how wilt thou be sure of to-morrow; since,

2. Secondly, *The uncertainty of life makes delay very dangerous*: Not to say, how dissingenuous it is to put off God thus from time to time, and make him stay thy leisure; not to leave thy sins willingly, till they leave thee, and defer thy resolutions of good to thy very Death-bed by thy good will, (thy ill will I should say) and not determining to shake hands with thy lusts, till thou hast taken leave of all thy other friends, and art ready to set out for an other world. How knowest thou but it may be said to thee, as to the rich fool in the Gospel? *This night shall thy Soul be taken from thee*; What a case would'st thou be in, should'st thou be surprized,

Luke 12. 20.



prized, and hurried away in thy Sins, before thou hast made thy Peace?

Mat. 24. 19.

The *Rabbins* have a famed saying, *Uno die ante mortem agenda est Penitentia*; A man must resolve to repent one day, before he dies: which one has well commented, that that One day must be this day; because we know not, whether we shall live to see another. How many have gone to Hell full of good purposes! 'Tis St *Bernard's* note upon *Vae praegnantibus*, woe to them that are with child in those days.

This may be the last Opportunity thou may'st have, the last Sermon thou wilt hear. But this is but a may be, some one may say, and therefore it may as well not be. True, but what wise man would put it to such a venture.

Joh. 9. 4.

Psal. 95. 7.  
Eph. 4. 30.  
Rom. 2. 4.  
Gen. 6. 3.  
Psal. 32. 7.

3. Thirdly, *Every one hath a day of grace*. The Sun may set upon thee, thou knowest not how soon; work while thou hast day before thee. *Res delicata Sanctus Spiritus*; the Holy Spirit will not be dallied with; cannot away with a lukewarm indifference. *To day if thou wilt hear his voice*. Grieve not the Spirit with unkind delays. Vex not Gods patience, which waits for thy return, and would lead thee to repentance. His Spirit will not always strive. Break off in time, and come in, whilest thou hast admittance; seek God while he may be found especially.

4. Fourthly, *Take heed of filling up the measure of thine iniquity*: Some go so far even in this life, as never to return. They are pointed out for destruction, and wear Gods mark as *Cain* did; when God gives them over, and seals them to damnation, and delivers them into the power of Satan.

Well, but thou'lt say, there's no fear of that with me; I find my heart mov'd many times, and the good Spirit breathing upon me. That will not do, if thou go no further. Therefore

Psal. 119. 67.

5. Fifthly, thou should'st *take thyself at such advantages and pursue convictions home*, and drive them close to thy heart: After a good Discourse, or under any affliction, when thou findest thy heart warm within thee, quench not the smoking flax, but blow it up into a bright flame of zealous resolution. Thus *David* did; *before I was afflicted, says he, I went astray, but now I resolve to keep thy word*.

6. Sixthly, *Fasten and rivet those thy purposes of a well begun course and thy resolutions of amendment* with frequent Reading and Meditation and Prayer and holy conference. Though it be Gods work to turn the heart, he does it in his own way. His Ordinances are the Conduit pipes, that usually convey his graces; nor are his assistances to be expected any other way than in the ordinary means. For instance, the Spirit claps his seal upon the heart; but thou must wait upon him for't in his own appointments. The Sacrament is a sealing time. Attend him there, to sign thy vows and resolutions, and renew thy Covenant with God by Sacrifice in the blood of the Covenant.

But then in the *fourth* and last place, to come to a perfect closure and an intire Compliance of the Whole man, with this *disfamen* and resolution of the judgment, to make this determination practical; 'tis not a *Velleity*, a *Balaam's* wish, not a *sempierna voluntas*, which was *Agrippa's* religion, who was almost perswaded, that will serve turn: but it must be a full Assent and constant Practice, in a turning of the whole Heart, a compleat ingagement of the Will and Affections, of all the Faculties of the soul and Members of the body, in an universal and impartial Obedience: when we are clearly fetcht off from all the Mistakes and Miscarriages of our former

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mer life, and quite unbottom'd from Nature and vicious custom, and implanted into Christ; when our *σώματιον*, *body, Soul and spirit* are Sanctified and cleansed from all impurities, and furnished with a new stock of right and sound principles and holy resolutions; and we are transformed by the renewing of our mind, and are born *ἀνωθεν*, *denuo*, over again, and *desuper* from above, and the work of Regeneration is perfectly wrought in us; when the old man of sin is mortified, and dead with the lusts thereof, and we are quickned in the Spirit to a newness of life; when the whole building of the earthly *Adam* is pull'd down, and the rubbish of our former Conversation carried off, and a new Spiritual Structure raised according to righteousness, and dedicated for a Temple to the Holy Ghost.

Some there are, sober and considering persons that can understand and examin things and determin well enough; but do not go through with the Work, but stickle in the birth, and cannot bring forth. The Will either weak or perverse, the Affections stark and stiff, or desperately preingaged; The *intus exstans*, some minion Lust within keeping possession by main force, and shutting out the tenders of grace; so that now *Nun persuadēbis etiam si persuaseris*; let them be convinc'd never so much, they cannot be prevail'd with.

Again the heart is deceitful above all things. *Psal. 64. 6*, the Hebrew expresses it significantly *קִמְיוֹ לֵב* *a deep heart*. 'Tis hard to come to the bottom of it; deep as a Well, which when foul, must have all the water that was in it laded forth, all muddy prepossession of evil habits purg'd out by repentance, and then be supplied with fresh springs of an ever-overflowing grace.

Wherefore, to make sure of the Heart, to ingage and fasten the Will, take these three *Reasons*.

1. *All we can do without That is nothing*. If the Heart be dead in trespasses and sins, the gawdy flourish of an outside Profession is but as the adornments of an Hearse, flowers strowed upon a Carcass. The fear of Laws, regard to Credit, care of Interest are but sorry insufficient Restraints, if grace do not *φρουρεῖ τὴν καρδίαν*, keep garrison in the heart. *Popish penance* may somewhat afflict the outward man, and be a bodily exercise, but that avails nothing, unless true repentance fetch out the Core—from within

2. The Will's all. *Animus cujusq; est quisque*, The Mind of a man is the man. Where the mind is thoroughly convinced and changed, there will follow presently an alteration quite through the whole Man. All parts and powers pay a ready obedience to the commands of the Will. When that takes in kindly the light communicated to it from the Understanding and humbly submits it self and yields to the powerful and prevailing Truths, and is impregnated by the impulses and influences of God's good Spirit, it does with its elicit acts (like the Spring in a Watch) set all the rest in motion.

3. 'Tis much easier to Be really good, than 'tis only to seem so: Every one has that care of their reputation, that they would be thought good. *Machiavil* himself commends the appearance and pretence of being religious to his Prince. I need not tell you what kind of people those were, who lately among us went under the name of the *Godly party*. But surely such must carry on their design with great difficulty and reluctance. The Hypocrite has a very hard part to act; who, besides a continual anxiety and fear of discovery, is fain to be at a great deal of pains, to use a great deal of artifice and shift, to cozen others and himself too in the end: whilst the down right good man, whose intentions and words and actions

2 Thes. 5. 23.

Rom. 12. 2.

1 Pet. 1. 23.

Phil. 4. 7.

ons are alike and all of a peice, who acts from a clear honest principle, walks confidently and fears no surprife.

The Will, thus drawn in, will quickly bring in the Affections along with her, which will every of them, in Spiritual Objects, meet with great Varieties of Intertainment, and be sure to find that fatisfaction, which in vain they hunted for in outward injoyments: and then 'twill conform the Outward man into a *decorum* of action, befitting the Principles of Grace and the Dignity of our Profession.

To fum up the business of *Repentance* in a word; the wise man, *Prov.* 28. 13. has reduced it to two heads, to *confess* and *forsake* our fins. *S. Bernard* almost as short and not much unlike, *Dolere præterita, Cavere futura*; to grieve and be displeased with our selves for what is past, and to take better heed for the time to come.

Mat. 3. 8.

It must be a *Repentance from sin* as well as *for sin*; It must be of *Thoughts* as well as *Deeds*; of *Errors in judgment* as well as *Miscarriages of life*; finally it must bring forth *Fruits*, and be accompanied with *Works* meet for *Repentance*. To repent, to cry *peccavi*, and go on still in the same sin, to be always craving Gods mercy, and never stand in fear of his justice, is in short but to mock God and our own souls to boot.

Further, our *Repentance* must be proportionable to our *Offences*. Greater fins must be taken to heart with greater regrets. The more scandalous and notorious any ones Faults have been, the more signal must his *Conversion* be, and the more exemplary his *Conversation*. The longer we have continued in any ill practice, the more lasting must our exercise of *Repentance* be. *Chronical* and *habitual* distempers must be put into a Course of spiritual *Physick*.

Joh. 6. 7.

To shut up all: *Repentance*, as 'tis a necessary Duty, so 'tis a great Priviledg. None so Perfect, but need it; none so Bad, but may attain it: Witness *Mary Magdalen*, the penitent *Thief*, the *Publican*, the *Prodigal*, *Judas* himself, it was not so much his Treason as his Impenitence gave him the character of a Devil; For so much as men harden themselves in their sin, so much they grow into the nature of Devils, who though thy beleave, yet cannot repent.

To stir us up to this *Duty* of *Repentance*, I shall not need to seek for *Arguments*; we have one and a potent one too at hand: *The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*.

I shall conclude with that of the Apostle, *2 Tim. 4. 18*. onely turning the words into a wish, *The Lord deliver us from every evil work*, (which must be done by *Repentance*) and preserve us unto his Heavenly Kingdom; to Whom be *Glory* for ever and ever. Amen.



# A Sermon upon S<sup>t</sup> MATTHEW's Day,

Preached at S<sup>t</sup> Peter's Westminster, Sept. 21. 1675.

We are *this day* to celebrate the Memory of S<sup>t</sup> Matthew, once a *Publican*, afterward advanced to the highest Dignity in the Church to be an *Apostle*. That he was the *One*, and how he came to be the *Other*, the Gospel of the Day written by himself informs us,

## Chap. I X. Ver. 9.

*And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.*



IN the Words we may observe on the one hand some Actions of our *blessed Lord*, on the other some Characters of the *Person*, he makes choice of for that high Office.

Our Lord we may take notice of in these three Instances.

I. The Passage; *And as Jesus passed forth from thence.*

II. The View; *He saw a man.*

III. The Call; *And he saith unto him, Follow me.*

The *Publican* is set forth to us,

1. By his Name: *A man called Matthew.*

2. By his Imploy: *Sitting at the receipt of custom.*

3. By his ready Obedience: *And he arose, and followed him.*

These will be the *Heads* of our ensuing Meditations, of which as briefly as I may, that I may say somewhat of them all.

I. *First*, Then the Passage: *As Jesus passed forth from thence*, which will take in two considerable Circumstances of *Time* and *Place*, *when* and *where* this was done. *As he passed.* When was that? *from thence.* Where was it?

The *Place* had been the Scene of many of his Miracles; *Capernaum*, whither he went to dwell, when he left *Nazareth*, as we read in the 4<sup>th</sup> Chapter, therefore called in the first verse of this Chapter, *ἰδία πόλις*, *his own City*. Blest City! hadst thou but known thy Advantages? hadst thou, as neither thou nor thy Mother-city *Jerusalem* did, understood in that thy day, as thou mightst and shouldst have done. Thy *Saviour* born at *Bethlehem*, and bred at *Nazareth*, now owns Thee for his City: for though he travell'd much up and down all *Galilee*, yet in thee it was, that he fixed

Luk. 19. 4.

Ver. 7.

fixed his Abode; and his House among the rest, how mean soever it might be made, one glorious part of thy Dwellings; as we find a little above the *Text*. Happy People! to have *Christ's* Presence, his Word and Ordinances, in his Doctrine and Miracles among you; but much more Unhappy, that you neglected such gracious Opportunities! O may it never be our Case, as we are so favour'd, so to be in like manner negligent, as ye were!

This being a Sea-Town, scituate upon the Lake of *Galilee*, gave our *Saviour* the Advantage of passing to and fro, in his Disciples Fisher-boats, with ease to all the Neighbouring Towns and Countries, that border'd on *Genesareth*.

This also was the Reason, why *Matthew* as a *Publican* was settled here in his Employ, to take the Customs of the Sea, and the Tributes of Passengers: whom, as his Office in the *Hebrew* Language, intituled, בעל עברה *the Master* or *Overseer of the Passage*; so never did he meet with a better *Passenger* then now, who past him from his earthly Cares, and worldly Gains, to spiritual Employments, and heavenly Rewards.

Happy *Publican*, to have thy Office fixed here in such a conjuncture! Thy *Jesus*, though he pass along, will not pass thee by, nor will he pass *Toll-free*, but bestow that on thee, which shall be infinitely better worth to thee, then all thy Trade, and those meaner Acknowledgments, that others by force and with ill-will were wont to pay thee.

Consider what it is, of what hopes and values, to be in *Christ's* way, to have to do where he is used to pass, who uses to do good wherever he goes.

It was but just now, as appears by the foregoing part of the *Chapter*, that *Christ* had wrought a miraculous Cure upon a poor *Paralytick*; and that, as his manner was, and as became him, who was Physician of soul and body both, with the pardon of his sins to boot. Which, though it stumbled some, yet the Cure sufficiently justified, and filled the multitude with just and surprizing Admirations.

Our *Saviour* leaving the Throng, retires to his Home; and after some small Repose, loving to divide his time betwixt the satisfactions of a pious *Privacy*, and the Duties of a charitable *Converse*, comes forth again to seek new Occasions of doing good; He comes forth at the Sea-gate, and takes a Walk upon the *Key*, where Passengers and other Company, either for Business or Diversion, were wont to be, and there finds what he looks for, another Object of as much pity as the man sick of the Palsie was, a *Publican*.

Gracious *Lord*, how diligent art thou in doing good? how negligent are we in receiving it? who art fain to look us out, and makest that many times, which seems meer *Chance*, to be a blessed *Occasion* to us, of spiritual improvement, and of eternal assurance; and turnest Accidents into special Instances of love and intimacy; if we do but as we should do, regard thy goings, observe thy looks, and obey thy calls. For as thou passedst from thence, in thy passage thou castest an eye of mercy upon him, who is now a slave of the world, but design'd by thee to be an eminent servant of thine. As *Jesus* pass'd along, he saw a man named *Matthew*. That's our 2d.

II. The View. He saw him, *εἶδεν*, looking about he spied him, or as he went along, (so we use to do) unexpectedly, and without design he cast his eyes on him: but there was more in it then so. This sight of thy Saviours, *Publican*, might be Casual indeed to thee; thou mightest not be aware of it, nor at all think what Eye thou layest under, till the gracious glance startled thee,

and struck thee into a sacred fit of Astonishment, and a due preparation for the Command, that was to follow, of following him; who first be-speaks thee with his *look*, and then makes use of the authority of his *voice*, to make good his conquest over thy world engaged mind; but sure to thy Saviour himself it was no Chance, that has thus brought thee into his sight. He was well aware, and resolved aforehand what to do; he knew thy heart, and his eye-lids are now open'd to try thee, and to search thee out.

Wherefore St *Luke* has chose a word of a more exquisite Importance, *εἶδον*, he beheld him; as a thing to be seen, with *judgment*, and as a thing worth the seeing, with *affection*: he lookt him thorough, and judged him fit, at least resolved to make him so, and, as so, loved him: He saw him, as God saw things, which he made, at the Creation, that they were good, because he made them so.

Gen. i. 31.

I cannot think by the manner of expression, that *Christ* had any personal knowledge of this *Publican* before this Interview; for so it ought to be read, according to the order of the words in the Greek, *He saw a man sitting at the custom, whose name was Matthew*; which seems to disown any former acquaintance betwixt them. And indeed there needed not; for *Christ*, who saw *Nathanael* under the Fig-tree before he came in person to him, and who at sight knew what was in men, and needed not that any, not the men themselves should tell him; could and did without any gradual tryals infallibly pass judgment.

John i. 48.

John 2. 25.

I will not deny, but the fame of *Christ's* Person and Miracles might tempt any ones Curiosity, if there were no more, especially that were an Inhabitant of *Capernaum*, where he now dwelt, to come and see him at least; nor will I say, but *Matthew* might probably enough be one of the many *Publicans*, who might sometimes pay him a looser, and somewhat an unconcerned Attendance, in respect of what his constant Followers did. But that *Christ* had hitherto taken any particular distinct Notice of him, there is nothing in the *Story*, can to my understanding make out: and if granted, it would somewhat derogate from that *Omniscience* I now mention'd, whereby he could immediately judge of mens Inclinations; and indeed from his method of Election of his *Disciples*, as we find in other Instances of the like nature; where, upon the very first Address, so far as *Gospel-story* hath inform'd us, he useth this form of words, *Follow me*.

But be that, as it will, and as the Hearer pleases, whether *Christ* saw him ever before or no; here lies the signal Favor of this sight, that he singles him out now alone, and in a distinguishing kindness makes him the mark to shoot the lovely and love-creating glances of his heavenly eyes at. *Oculi sunt in amore duces*. This *look* begat love, and was the forerunner and evidence of an affection to follow.

The *Son of God*, upon the assumption of humane Nature, had his Soul touched with all our *Passions*, yet so as to be sinless and innocent emotions of his diviner Mind; and, as we cannot but do, unless we be very well vers'd in the art of Dissimulation, he also made Discoveries of them in his very looks and eyes. These are the *Windows* of the Heart, through which it sees, and is it self seen, and shows all its Pleasures and Discontents to others: hence mutual sight proves such Entertainment to *Friends*, and breeds no less Regret to *Foes*.

Our blessed Lord, who was all made of Compassion and Love, being freed from all those rugged, boistrous Distempers, which we, whilst we seek to trouble others with, labour under our selves, feeling the worst Effects of our Heats and Animosities within our own breasts; He, I say, had

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all the lines of Goodness drawn in his heavenly Face, and above all his Eyes sparkling with *Seraphic* love, and darting forth Rays of it, to warm and fire the Hearts of all that either beheld him, or he beheld.

Fortunate Man, whom He, who is now for ever to be thy *Lord*, hath cast and fixt his gracious Eye upon, to mark thee for his Friendship, and the choicest dignations of his Love!

Thy looks, blessed *Saviour*, when justly Angry, have kindly Operations, and work blest Effects. Thou, when thy Apostle *Peter* had shamefully denied thee, to a double breach both of that Fealty he ow'd thee as his Lord, and of that Promise he himself had lately with a voluntary and a reiterated Confidence made, thoughtst it enough to chastise him with thy Eye, and didst in one look at once wound and heal his heart.

O look upon me, as thou didst upon that *Apostle*, that I may weep for my Misdemeanors and frequent Denials of thee! O look upon me, as thou didst upon this *Publican*, that being guided by thy Eye, I may follow thee, as he did! Which brings us to the *Person*, whom our Saviour by this sight design'd for his Choice and Service. He saw a man named Matthew. That's the 3d.

III. The person's Name, *Matthew*: who by the other two Evangelists, *St Mark* and *St Luke*, (as it was usual enough for the same man to have several names) is called *Levi*, the son of *Alphaeus*.

Some would have these to be two different *Persons*, as well as *Names*. *Heracleon*, as he is quoted by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, reckoning up some, who were denied the opportunity of giving Testimony to *Christ* among the Heathens, names these four, *Matthew*, *Philip*, *Thomas* and *Levi*; and *Origen* makes *Matthew* to be an *Apostle*, but *Levi* to be onely a *Disciple* in common, and not an *Apostle*. Hereupon, together with some other Offers of reason from the sacred Text it self, *Grotius* makes it his guess, that *Levi* and *Matthew* might both be chosen at one and the same time, as both belonging to the *Custom-house*; and that *Levi*, at whose House the Feast was, and who was attended by the rest of the *Publicans*, might be the chief in that office, as *Zaccheus* was at *Jericho*, who is called ἀρχιτελώνης, the Chief of the *Publicans*, the Surintendant of the Finances, or Controller of the Customs; and that *Matthew* might be an *Under-Officer* employ'd by him.

I shall crave leave, if I dissent from that great *Expositor's* conjecture, and rather embrace the common Opinion, which is so fairly confirm'd by all the Circumstances of the Story; for laying aside onely the diversity of the Name, the three *Evangelists* do exactly agree. What he quoteth as before reported, is little better than a single *Witness* against a full concurrent Evidence. As to those little reasons that are brought in beside, they do but make a shew, and are easily answer'd: since that *St Matthew* says only in general terms, that *Jesus* sat at meat in the house, not naming whole house; whereas they plainly say, 'twas *Levi's* house; and that he does not any where call himself *Levi*, is to be imputed to his modesty, which was the reason also he doth not say it was his own house, and made him content with the Title of his former profession, *Matthew the Publican*, even there, where he sets down the List of the Twelve *Apostles*; wherein also, out of the same modesty, he puts *Thomas* before himself, whom the others place after him. And therefore 'tis likely enough, they call him *Levi* also in this passage, not *Matthew*, which was his more noted Name, on purpose to disguise his former Employ, as *St Hierom* observes; as being willing to treat a penitent Brother with all tenderness, and not upbraid him with the Errors or Miscarriages of his past life; and that according to a known rule among

Luke 19. 1.

Ver. 10.

Matt. 10. 3.

among the *Jews* themselves, that we ought not to say to such an one, זכור היאשבוים מ'עשיך *Remember thy former works.*

The name which is *Syrick*, signifies the same, say some, as in Greek *Theodoros*, or, as others, in Latin *Donatus*; nor are there wanting, who interpret it *Broker*, or *Toll-gatherer*; as if his very Office had given it him. This is not material, nor deserves it any further inquiry.

His own free dealing with himself, and his brother *Evangelists* tender treating of him, is worth our Remark; that 'tis a good sign of true *penitence*, when we spare not our selves in the mention and acknowledgment of our own former faults; and 'tis a necessary piece of *Christian Charity*, to be favorable in speaking of others, and not to say the worst, but rather to praise *Gods grace* for what they are after Conversion, then to reproch *humane infirmity*, for what they were before.

There is one thing more may be observed, that if *Matthew* were *Levi*, and was the Son of *Alphaeus*, (as 'tis said by the other two) he was Kin to our *Saviour* on the Mothers side, who is said to have been the *Sister* or *Kinswoman* of the blessed *Virgin*. But as *Christ* did not govern himself in his Choice by carnal Affection; for he has prefer'd several others before those two *James* and *Jude*, who are called *the Lords brethren*; so neither doth this *Apostle* pride himself in that carnal Relation; but with an humble remembrance of his sinful estate, styles himself *the Publican* still, as *Jude* also with the same humility, intitles himself *the Servant of Jesus*, though he be by others term'd his *brother*, that is, his near Kinsman. And thus we have done with the Name of the person, we are now to speak of his Employment; the 4th Head.

IV. He was sitting at the receipt of Custom. He was a Receiver of *Customs*, or *Tributes*; a gatherer of *Tenths*, sayes the *Arabick*; and was now attending upon the duty. I confess, a scandalous Employment, that heard ill, throughout all the conquer'd Provinces in the *Roman* dominion; and the men that managed it, lookt on as *Thieves* and *Cheats* for their exactions and ill usage generally of the people, even to the infamy of a Proverb, πάντες τελῶται πάντες εἰσιν ἀρπαγες; men of no better reputation, then *Promoters*, *Informers*, and *Catchpoles*.

And besides the publick Grievance, the *Jews* had peculiar prejudice against the Office, as the Badge of their Servitude; and the Upbraid of their lost Liberty, and the Complement of all their other Miseries; especially if those of their own Countrey undertook it, as it mostly fell out to be, the Natives being taken in to this affair to choose, as best understanding the customs of their People. In this case they resented it highly, and laid load of Censure upon the men, however blameless they might be in the execution of it, as perfidious *Apostates* to Religion, and barbarous *Oppressors* of their Brethren. And they justified all the Scandals, they could cast on them, from this; that they did, as the necessity of the Employ many times forced them to do, converse with *Heathens*. For which reason they accounted them in the same rank, as appears by that form of our *Saviours* taken from the *Jews*, Let him be unto thee as an *Heathen* and a *Publican*; and they yoked them with the most notorious infamous Wretches, such were they whom they called *Sinners*; as if they had been termed *Publicans*, not from their publick Office, of farming the publick Customs, but for their publick ill Lives, and the publick Censure that was upon them.

Further, They held it was not lawful to shew them any common Civility, to eat or drink, or so much as to walk or talk, or have any thing to do with them, more then needs must. Their evidence would not be admitted in any Court. Money received from them was not to be laid out in Purchase,

John 19. 25.

1 Cor. 9. 5.

Matt. 18. 17.

Matt. 9. 11.

chafe, nor put to the rest of the Estate. They made no conscience to cheat and coufen them, when they could get them at that advantage, even with a Lye, and that bound with an Oath. In a word, they shund them as Pests, and avoided coming near them, as if the very Air had been infected with their breath.

And now, poor *Publican*, after this black Character, after these foul Aspersions, what shall we say to thee? what can we say for thee? whom the love of gain has so far prevail'd with, as to disoblige thy Countrymen, to scandal thy Religion, and to bring discredit to any other, that shall receive thee. Is *Christianity* then become the shelter of the greatest Crimes? and hast thou, *holy Jesu*, set open an *Affylum*, a Sanctuary for the entertainment of such Profligates as these, *Publicans and Sinners*, whom no other Religion will vouchsafe to own?

Matt. 9. 13.

O *Sinner*, whoever, whatever thou art, acknowledge the goodness of thy *Redeemer*, whose Design it was to save that which is lost, and who came to call Sinners to Repentance. Despair not of finding that mercy for thy penitent Soul, which thy gracious Master has afforded to others in thy condition; and seeing thou seest here a *Publican* advanced to the *Apostolical* Chair, and placed in the Supreme Dignity of the Church; assure thy self, that, if thou canst repent thee truly of thy sins, how many or how great soever they may be, thou shalt find some corner in the Church, nor shalt thou be denied a room in the Fellowship of *Saints*.

And yet after all this Cry and Calumny, the *Publicans* at the worst were more hopeful, then many of their proud Censurers, and did by Repentance get to Heaven before the pretending *Pharisees*, who thought themselves so righteous, that they needed it not.

Nor indeed was the Employ it self (though ill managed oft-times) so Criminal, as they make it.

'Tis true, 'tis very Hard, I will not say Impossible, for a man to behave himself well, and avoid all blame in some Trades and Professions; I mean such as are made the Instruments of Vanity, or such as cannot thrive and be maintain'd, but by the sins or ruines of other people. And of this last kind is the *Publicans* business, which had such an appearance of Dishonesty, that it drew a Disparagement upon every one that had any thing to do in it.

Notwithstanding this, there have been Examples to the contrary. *Roman* Story tells us of One, no less a man then the Emperor *Vespasian's* Father, who had a Statue erected for him with this Inscription, Καλῶς τελω-  
μοδὲν, To the honest *Publican*. Nor need we go so far: we have one in the *New Testament*, who, for ought appears, was as *Just*, as his \* Name bespeaks him, *Zacchæus*: and it may be made out by that Account he gives of his Estate, that it was honestly got. For says he, *One half of my goods I give to the poor*, there's his *Charity* settled; and then he makes a challenge, *If he had done any one any wrong, he would*, out of the remaining moiety, *make fourfold restitution*, which was *Thieves Law*; there's his *Justice*: so that, dividing this *Half* into four parts, there could be but one *fourth* part, that is, one *eighth* of the whole Estate, that could fall under suspicion; and if so, we must suppose too, what is not to be supposed, that by this means what with his *Charity*, what with his *Justice*, he would leave himself quite nothing. For one *Half* was actually disposed of, and if one *Fourth* part of the other *Half* had been faulty, the other *Three* must have gone with it, to make good the *Restitution*.

\* זכאי Justus.

Luk. 19. 8.

And that our *St Matthew* was one of these honest *Publicans*, I find no reason to distrust; for his sitting at the receipt, is not an argument so much, as some would make it, of his Fraud or Covetousness, as of his Fidelity and Care in the discharge of his place.

It



It is no idle Observation, that *Christ* found his Disciples at the work of their Callings, when he thought fit to call them; as some mending their Nets, *Matthew* here at his Employ, which though in common esteem bad enough, yet we have shewn might honestly be followed: and *ἔργον ἐδέξεν* *ord's* S., No work shames a man, that well performs it. The Devil takes advantage of mens idleness, who, when they have nothing to do, are easily tempted to do ill; and he possesses himself of the empty soul, let it be never so well garnish'd.

Matt. 12. 44.

Lord, do thou so govern me by thy providence and grace, that when thou comest to cast an eye upon me, and to overlook me, I may be found, if not so doing, if not actually employ'd in works of piety, yet I may be found doing that which is lawful and right.

*Aulus Gellius*, no despicable Author, tells us a story, though others give another account, of one *Protagoras*, who being poor, was forced for a livelihood to carry burdens. One day he had got some chumps on his back, which he was bringing to Town for fewel. *Democritus*, a fam'd Philosopher, meets him; admiring his contrivance, how he had got that rude parcel of stuff together in that order, for his further satisfaction bids him lay down his Bundle, untie it, and do it up again. He does so, and that with that Method and Artifice, that the Philosopher perceiving by this Essay, he had a Logical head, and an Ingeny fit for Science, told him, Come, young man, you must along with me; you are fit for greater and better things, then this you are about. He takes him along with him, maintains him, breeds him up in *Philosophy*, wherein he prov'd subtle, and in some degree eminent.

It was the same case with *Matthew* here, if I may make comparison. He was puzzling and pelting himself in a sorry Employment. Our Saviour comes by, and finds him sitting at it; he fetches him off with a gracious Call, as if he had said, Come, leave this sordid and scandalous Employ; I have greater and nobler service for thee. And he saith unto him, Follow me. This the 5<sup>th</sup> Particular.

V. His Call; in a word of Command, Follow me: a word very well befitting the Captain of our salvation, when he was to List Souldiers or Officers in his Militia. It was his usual form upon these occasions: and sometimes with a shrewd addition of taking up the Cross, and following him; especially where he went upon tryal. And indeed the Cross is supposed as a condition to Christianity; every private person, that gives up his name here, must expect that; much more Apostles, and those who are design'd to high places of service, are obliged to follow their Master in his humility and sufferings.

When this word was spoken, how did it rouze and warm the Publicans heart? how did it enlighten his mind, and inflame his zeal?

The greatest things have been always done with the fewest words; it was so at first, when God did as it were speak things, and his word was productive, and he called things that were not to be what they are.

1 Cor. 1. 18.

What efficacy this Word had, what change it wrought on *Matthew's* mind, how it run through every vein of his heart, and fill'd his soul with new senses, and strange transports, we shall shew anon.

We read of one *Polemo*, a debauched Young man, who in one of his wild humors, disguis'd in drink and habit both, lit into a Philosophers School, where he was discoursing of Temperance, and other Moralities, and did so convincingly apply himself to this Chance-customer, that in a little time my Gallant began to be ashamed, and out of countenance, slipped off the Chaplet

of

of flowers off his head, and let it fall on the ground; tore off his knots of Ribbands, and other fineries; compos'd himself, and at last grew to that sober understanding, that after that time he wholly bent himself to the study of *Philosophy*, and prov'd so good a Proficient, that, after the death of that Master, he succeeded in the School.

St *Matthew*, without doubt, had his head and his heart full of worldly Cares, of which at this words speaking, as it had been a sacred Charm, he was wholly dispossest.

Such was the Majesty of our *Saviours* Person, such the brightness of his Countenance, the attractiveness of his Looks, and the authority of his Word, that there needed no other *Logick* to convince, no other *Rhetorick* to persuade his Followers.

And yet this very Word, which we may justly wonder at, though spoken by *Christ* with the same Earnestness, hath not always had the same effect. Some have not come at the Call; others, though they have come, have not follow'd him, as they should do: and that, to shew on one hand, that there is something on our part, when we are called, to be done by us; there must be a concurrence, an obedient compliance of our will; else we may resist the Word as well as the Spirit: and on the other hand, to shew that external Profession will not secure men from secret Impiety, nor excuse them for it.

Acts 7. 51.

The rich young man was hopeful, so far as the Commandments went. *Christ* looked on him, and loved him; but when this word of command came, he shrunk back, and went his way sad, for he had great possessions, Houses and Lands, and Bags of money stood in his way to Heaven, and he had learnt to observe and keep them as much as all the Commandments.

Mark 10. 22.

*Judas* was a Disciple of *Christ*, and yet no true Follower; he was called to be an Apostle, and in that sense chosen, but not elect. O how much better is it to be called to *Sainthood*, then to the highest Office? This sets one aloft in the Church visible, but that gives one a share in the invisible. One may be an Apostle, and yet a Reprobate; so was *Judas*: while the Saint has an assurance of Gods favour here, and an earnest of his Hopes hereafter.

And yet *Judas* too, no question, as successful in his Ministry as the rest; since, as our Church has rightly stated it, the virtue and efficacy of *Christs* Ordinances and Church-Offices, doth not depend upon the sanctity or worthiness of the Persons that administer them. It is with the Church, as it was with the Ark; many that help'd to build her, and were good Workmen too, perished themselves in the Deluge.

Psal. 27. 8.

Luke 5. 28.

O Lord *Jesu*! may thy Call be so effectual to me, to every soul, that when thou say'st, Seek ye my face, our heart may answer, Thy face, Lord, will we seek; and with thy Apostle *Matthew*, when thou bid'st us follow thee, we may, as he did, leave all, all our worldly Profits, all our carnal Pleasures, and follow thee, whithersoever thou goest thy self, whithersoever thou shalt think fit to send us. That's the last.

VI. His ready Obedience. And he arose and followed him. His rising up shews Reverence and respect, as well as Resolution. He now for ever hence-forward owns *Christ* for his Master, and resolves to quit all, that he may be free to embark in his Service.

He was Wealthy and Wise; he is now to forgo a gainful Employ; he sees nothing before him, whither he is going, but Poverty and Persecution; and yet is very well pleas'd with his Change. He knows this new Master

is not worth a *didrachmon*, not two groats to pay his Tribute with; but he knows that *miracle* and *divinity* can supply that, and every thing else; and had rather be a *Minister* to a poor *Christian*, than an *Officer* under the greatest *Cæsar*. He is now to gain others Souls by *Preaching*, instead of hazarding the loss of his own by *Trading*. The other was a paltry Business, limited to a little *Meer* or *Lake*: he is now made one of the *Receivers general* for *Heaven*; and all Places, all Persons are to be *tributary*. Balancing one thing with another, the Troubles of the *World* with the Duties of *Religion*, he overlooks all disadvantages, and prefers *πνευματικία πνευματικῶν*, as St *Chrysostom* calls it, this *spiritual Traffick*, before uncertain Riches, and vexatious Customs.

Matt. 17. 27.

These thoughts make him not stand to parley, he accepts the condition at first word; and for a *Bargain* of this advantage, thinks there need not two. He is *dicto audiens*, obedient to the heavenly Call, as St *Paul* says he was, and has nothing to reply, nothing more to ask.

Acts 16. 19.

One might have thought, that in a Business of such Consequence, there might have been allow'd a little *Time* to consider, and that the *Publican* might have expostulated, as the Young man in the *Comedy* does, whom his Father meeting in the street, bids him, without once acquainting him beforehand, by him home, and get him ready, he must be married to day; *Tantum rem tam negligenter?* To do a thing of such moment in so slight a manner? What! *As he passes by?* at first sight? at one word speaking? why? can *Christ* desire, can he expect a present Obedience?

There was none of all this. St *Luke* says, *he left all*, and went along with him immediately: all his gains he had already got, all his hopes of getting more.

What some say of his leaving his *Account* unstated and unclear'd, is not at all likely; since he was to continue, notwithstanding this Change, hard by; and might have some other Opportunity to take out his full and final Discharge. Indeed *Julian* and *Porphry* take that advantage of this Opinion, that they charge him with falshood, that he had cheated the *State*, and shelter'd himself under the *Christian* Profession: or, at least, if he could prove himself an *Honest man*, they say he was a *Fool*, to barter his Trade for Religion. But no worldly Thoughts in himself, no Surmises or Censures of others could prevail with him to alter his mind, or keep him from ingaging in this better Service.

Being call'd, he *follows* without scruple or delay, and accepts the Command with a speedy and chearful Obedience. For knowing, that God loves a *cheerful giver*, though he forsook all, he kept a *Reserve*, to testify his Chearfulness and Joy in the entertainment of his *Master*, which he made splendid, and becoming the Occasion, having enough left for his *Consecration-dinner*.

2 Cor. 9. 7.

Nor was his Obedience less *constant* then *speedy*. For he held out following his *Master* to the end, till his Masters departure, and till his own death. While *Christ* was on earth, he attended and accompanied him in all his Travels, in all his Necessities and Dangers. After his *Ascension*, he staid in *Jewry* for some time, and there preached the Gospel to his Countrymen, which at the request of some Convert-Jews, or by the command of the rest of the *Apostles*, he committed to writing in the Hebrew Language, as all the Ancients agree; and St *Jerom* affirms for himself, that he had seen and transcribed a Copy of it. St *Bartholomew* took it with him into *India*, from whence 'twas brought back again by *Pantanus* into Greece, as *Eusebins* makes the report. This at last being lost, the *Translation*, which, as *Theophylact* tells us, was perform'd by St *John*, or as *Athanasius* says,

by



by *James* the less, was accepted of in its stead, and received into the *Canon*.

Having continued eight years among the *Jews* at home, he then takes a Journey into *Parthia*, and thence into *Æthiopia* near the *Indies*, where he endeavor'd to propagate the *Gospel*: so says *Cassian* of him, *Æthiopiam nigram doctrinâ fidei fecit candidam*. But alas! his labour there prov'd but washing the *Blackamoor*. For at last, which was the success of most of the *Apostles* in their several Provinces, and one way of their following their *Master*, he is called forth to seal the doctrine he had preach'd with his blood, and by the command of one *Hyrtacus*, a King of that Countrey, is beheaded, as Tradition goes, with a *Halberd*, meekly kneeling on his knees. Thus to the dignity of his *Apostleship*, and the other merit of his being an *Evangelist*, was superadded a third advantage, the Crown of *Martyrdom*.

I cannot leave this, without a brief *Application* of the whole. I am truly perswaded out of that *charity* I have to mankind, and am very well assured from my own manifold experience of Gods goodness to my unworthy self; that there's no man, be his heart never so wicked, be his life never so corrupt, but has at times some good thoughts come upon him. 'Tis the character, the *Psalmist* gives of a desperate fool, that *God is not in all his thoughts*.

*Psal. 10. 4.*

No. God has created us by his power, and design'd us by his wisdom, and preserves us by his mercy, for greater and nobler ends than to serve the wicked world, and sinful flesh; nor is he wanting by his grace to afford every one sufficient means for his spiritual conduct. He passeth by us often, when we are not aware of him; he looks upon us, and we see him not; and he calls us by checks of our own conscience, by motions of his holy Spirit, and by the preachings of his Word; but we stop our ears against him, and will not hear; and when he cries to us, *Follow me*, we sit still, and mind him not.

O let us open our eyes to behold him, our ears to hear him, and our hearts to receive him.

Let us know that he is ever near us, about our bed, and about our work, at our uprising, and our downlying, and understands all our ways and our thoughts too.

Let us convince our selves, that where ever we are, we are under his all-seeing Eye; and when at any time we feel our hearts warm'd with any good thoughts of him, let us be assured they are Summons from him, to take us off from our Sins, and to engage us in his Service.

O let us take strict notice of his goings towards us, let us awfully regard his looks, and with a ready obedience follow him at his call, in imitation of this blessed *Publican*, who is now in a multiplied Capacity of Glory, and an eminent Degree of Honour, together with his brother *Apostles* and *Evangelists* attending upon Him that sits on the Throne, and upon the Lamb.

To whom be Praise and Thanksgiving, Might, Majesty and Dominion, now and for ever. Amen.

A Sermon

# A Sermon upon St. *M A R K* S Day.

*Preached at Chelsey, April 25. 1675.*

Acts XV. 37, 38, 39.

*And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose Surname was Mark.*

*But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the Work.*

*And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other.*



THE Words, I have now read unto you, may suggest such Meditations, as will not, I suppose, prove altogether unreasonable even to our present Affairs and Occasions, as they are now managed, though with some Dissention and Heat, yet, I hope, through Gods good Providence, for publick Advantage of the Kingdom, and benefit of the Church.

To make haste to that, which may be of *Practical* Use, to which even those *Historical* passages, which will be interwoven into it, may some way or other be subservient also; we may Observe hence these three things.

1. *That Good men may unhappily sometimes give an occasion of Offence, what by their own, what by others Mistakes.*

This we gather here from St Mark himself, who had so highly offended St Paul, in that he departed from them from Pamphylia, and left the Work of the Gospel, wherein he had been employed jointly by the Apostle Paul and his Uncle Barnabas; that now upon a second tryal it was thought fit and resolved upon the one hand, that he should be laid aside, and not taken any more along with them to the Work, which he had formerly deserted.

2. *That Good men, who wish well to the Churches concerns in the General, may yet fall out and quarrel about the Particular ways and means of her service, so far as to be alienated and estranged from one another.*

And this may be collected from Paul and Barnabas here, two fellow-Commissioners in the Gospel, who yet upon a design of visiting and confirming the Churches, they had planted, came to such a Misunderstanding and Variance of carrying on the Work; the One of them pitching upon his Kinsman Mark as a likely Instrument, the Other utterly refusing his

service; that, as the Contention grew sharp betwixt them, they quitted one anothers company; and as if the same Continent could not now hold them both, the one went by Sea for *Cyprus*, the other travelled by Land to *Syria* and *Cilicia*.

3. *That the different Judgments of Pious and Worthy persons, though they may amount to a seeming separation, yet may be so managed by discretion, as not to prejudice Christian Charity, and may be so blest and succeeded by Gods providence, as to be rendred serviceable to the true Interests of the Church.*

And this Observation may be made good from the sequel of the Story, that, by means of these two great eminent Persons contention and quarrel, the Gospel was further propagated, and our *Mark* himself so well approved for his service, that he was perfectly at last reconciled to the great *Apostle*, and invited by him, when he was prisoner at *Rome*, as we read *2 Tim. 4. 11.* as a person profitable to him for the ministry: whither he came also, and attended and assisted him in that work, for desertion of which he is here accused; as may appear from the subscription of some *Epistles* written thence, wherein He amongst others is mentioned by name.

1. *First then, That the Carriage even of Good men may sometimes happily, nay unhappily, prove an occasion of Offence even to other good men; what through their own mistake, or those others mis-aprehension: we learn from St Mark's example, who by departing from Paul and Barnabas in the common Work of the Gospel, wherein they had all three been engaged, gave such an offence to St Paul, that he could not be perswaded to repose the same Trust, he had done before, in him again.*

To make out this, we shall

1. Inquire into the Story, the Matter of Fact here charged upon *Mark*, wherein it will be a little necessary, by way of Introduction, to give some Account or Character of the Person himself.

2. Set down, as well as we may guess them, some Reasons of that his desertion, for which he is here blamed.

And in both, we shall so order our discourse, as not to limit it only to this particular Case of *St Mark*; but to extend it to the general condition of all pious persons whatever; so as to evince the possibility either of their giving or others taking offence at their actions.

1. For the Person; our Church hath been so moderate, as to confine her self in her Anniversary remembrances only to Scripture-Saints. Wherefore we shall also in this account keep to Scripture-Story, and not borrow from Tradition to help it out.

He is called here *John*, whose surname was *Mark*; the same style, which is given him also *ch. 12. 12.* He had, it seems, which was usual, two Names. *John* likely his Jewish name, given him at his Circumcision; and the other *Mark*, a Roman appellation, probably to shew his being a Freeman, it being the custom, that when any one; that belonged to a Province under the Roman Jurisdiction, either purchased or otherwise obtained his freedom, he took up a Name in use among that people, as this was. So *St Paul* himself, who was before called *Saul*, as a Jew born, went afterward by the name of *Paul*: whither, as some conjecture, from the littleness of his stature, or, as I think rather, from the conversion of the Proconsul, *Sergius Paulus*, *Act. 13.* For immediately after that passage we find him so styled, and not before.

Indeed others we meet with too, that had their Surnames, upon another account,



account; as *Peter* in *Greek*, rendred by his Master, out of the *Syriac*, *Cephaz*, both the words in each Language signifying a *Rock*; who was besides that called *Simon* or *Simeon*; and *Barnabas* himself, so surnamed by the Apostles, his former name having been *Joses*, a Levite, and a *Cypriote* by birth.

He was the son of *Mary*, one who lived at *Jerusalem*, to whose house *Peter* came, after his miraculous deliverance out of Prison by the conduct of an Angel; as we read in that place of the *Acts*; a place where the *Christians* were then wont to meet, to perform their devotions. And this *Mary*, own sister to *Barnabas*; whereupon he is called *Marcus*, *sisters son* to *Barnabas*, Col. 4. 10.

His place in the Church was to be an *Evangelist*; and that a distinct office and of a two-fold Imploy both to *Preach* and to *Write* the Gospel. As to the duty of *Preaching*, they attended the *Apostles*, and went upon occasion as they sent them to places, whither themselves could not well go; and differed from *Bishops* and *Pastors* only in this, that those were *Stationary*, had a fixed and settled Residence in Churches already planted; these were *Itinerant*, and went up and down to impart the Gospel, where it had not yet been heard of, or upon special business were dispatched to visit and confirm the brethren, who had received it, and to carry orders upon particular new emergencies, as Messengers and Legates à latere.

Thus *Barnabas* and *Paul*, upon their return from *Jerusalem*, when they had fulfilled their Ministry, that is, carried relief, as they were ordered by the Church of *Antioch*, for the poor Christians in *Judea* in the time of that dearth foretold by *Agabus* the Prophet, they took *Mark* along with them, *Act*. 12. 25. And from *Antioch*, when by the appointment of the Holy Ghost, those two were commissioned to go for *Cyprus*, *Barnabas* his Country, *Mark* accompanied them thither as their Minister, *Act*: 13. 5. but at their loosing from *Paphos* a City of that Island, and going to *Perga* in *Pamphylia*, he departed from them and returned to *Jerusalem*, *vers*. 13. and now upon their dissention is made choice of again by his Uncle to go with him to *Cyprus*. After which we hear no more of him or his Uncle, (the sacred Historian minding only the Story and Adventures of *St Paul*) till this *Apostle* was a prisoner in *Rome*, whence he sends for *Timothy*, with a command to bring *Mark* along with him as one he had a special use for. And there he was with him, as we find both in the *Epistle* to the *Colossians*, and that to *Philemon*, which were both written from thence.

And if that be true, which one tells us he met with in the Records of *Padua*, that this *Mark* preached the Gospel in *Bavaria* and up the River *Danow*; it is not improbable, that *Paul* might imploy him thither; and accordingly *Grotius* interprets that passage to *Timothy*, where he bids him bring him *Mark* with him; for, says he, *he is profitable to me for the ministry*. 'Tis that learned mans note, that *Mark* was skilful in the *Latin* Tongue, and so was very useful to *Paul* in preaching the Gospel to those Countries, insomuch that some, if I remember well, have guessed, that his very Gospel was originally penned in that language: though others have made him as famous for the *Syriack* dialect, that they doubt not to conjecture at least, that we owe to him that *ancient Version* of the whole *New Testament* into the very Speech, which our Saviour himself used, when he was upon earth.

However he were for a great part of his time an Attendant first and last to *St Paul*, the Gospel which he wrote was ordered much by the informations and directions of *St Peter*, he being the *Amannensis* of this *Apostle*, as *St Luke* was of the other.

He was then an *Evangelist* in both senses, both as *Preacher* and *Writer* of the Gospel; one of the Four, who in the *Revelations* are called the *Four living Creatures*, that stand before the Throne: and he represented by that creature with the face of a *Lion*, because he begins with the *Voice of one crying in the wilderness*; as *St Luke* is by an *Ox* for entering upon his Evangelical Story with *Zacharias's* Priesthood.

You see then that so excellent a Person as this *Mark* was, a man so well qualified with all suitable gifts for the advantage of the Gospel, and one so well strengthened with the Interest not only of his *parts*, but also of his *relations*; his *Mother* such a Woman, as was *St Peters* entertainer, and the whole Churches friend; his *Uncle* such a man, as was an intimate Confident of *St Pauls*, and his Companion in a great part of his travels and successes: yet could not, did not bear himself so free from *blame*, or at least from *censure*, but that he incurred so high a displeasure with *St Paul*, that rather than be presently reconciled to him, he chose to break with his old friend *Barnabas* too.

The *fault* here charged upon him was, that he departed from them, when they departed from the Island *Cyprus*, to go thence to *Perga* in *Pamphylia*, thence to *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, and thence to *Iconium*, and so on to *Lystra* and *Derbe* Cities of *Lycaonia*, and so back again to *Pisidia* and *Pamphylia*, and thence to *Attalia*, where they took shipping for *Antioch*, from whence they had been recommended and sent out on this Voyage. They went a large Circuit of ground, had a great deal of Work to do, and met with many difficulties, and in several Instances, no question, stood much in need of the Service of this their Attendant. They had prest him to the work of the Gospel, he accepted their commands, and now unfaithfully quits the Service, and undutifully, leaves their Company. He goes off without fulfilling the Work of his Ministry, and leaves his *Uncle* and the great *Apostle* together, without their leave, to the deep Resentment of the *one*, such his Authority and Zeal, however the *other* might excuse it to himself, such his natural Affection and Indulgence to his Kinsman. But *St Paul*, who was not to be moved with carnal considerations, looks upon him no better than *Desertor ministerii*, and will not be prevailed with, to venture upon him a second time, or according to the *Spanish Proverb*, to trust him again, by whom he had been once deceived.

See from this Instance, how *censurable* on one hand, how *censorious* on the other even the Best of men may be. *St Mark* gives a palpable occasion of Offence, by quitting the *Apostles* company at once and his own ministry. *St Paul* is so highly offended, as to seem resolved never to own him or employ him more.

Was it, *Mark*, thy Miscarriage, which rendred thee justly blame-worthy? Then learn I and all such as I am, to take heed of incurring deserved Censure, to quicken our Gifts, to be diligent in our Functions, and to do the Work of Evangelists.

Was it, *Paul*, thy Mistake and Misprision, which put thee upon this heat of Passion and severity of Zeal? Then learn we all, to forbear one another in love, not to be over-hasty in our censures, and rather to be mindful of doing our own duty, then to reflect upon others and tax them for neglecting theirs.

2. For it may be upon farther Inquiry into the *Reasons* of this Fact, wherewith *Mark* is charged; it may appear, that though he did offend, yet it was not out of malicious wickedness, not out of design. It might be

be an *offence* perhaps *taken* as much as *given*, and such *scandals* involve the parties offended in the guilt no less, than the seeming offenders. If our own Conscience doth not accuse us, however others may censure us, God, who is greater even than Conscience, will acquit us. Alas! he judges not as man does. We judge according to outward *appearance*, but he judges according to inward *intentions*. We judge of mens hearts by their *actions*, but he judges of their actions by their *hearts*.

And in this case the *Apostle* himself avows his freedom, that he is not to be judged by *mans day*, but appeals to a higher Tribunal; as thinking himself not much concern'd, what men may think of him in those carriages, which are subject only to Gods tryal. A *Religious person*, who, upon the score of Charity, had run the hazard of his Reputation, by mixing with people of suspicious lives, order'd that saying for the Inscription of his Tomb, to forestall common Censure, which is ever ready to attend even innocent actions, *Nolite judicare ante tempus*, Judge not before the time; referring his cause to the Great Judge, who is the searcher of hearts.

I do heartily join with the *Psalmist* in that Prayer of his, *Psal. 141. 5.* If I, bad man as I am, do any thing at any time, that may justly offend good men, *let the righteous smite me*, says he, and so say I, *it shall be a kindness*: let them reprove me, *but let not their precious balm break my head*. Brotherly Reproof is one of the greatest Offices of *Christian Charity*; according to that, *Thou shalt love thy Brother, and shalt not suffer sin upon him*: But when it proceeds not from *love*, when 'tis mingled with *malice* and invenom'd with *calumny*, when instead of my *amendment* it designs my *mischiefs* and *ruine*, then instead of a soveraine *balsam* it becomes a deadly *poison*: and thus we may pray to be preserv'd against it, and to be deliver'd from it; so he closes the Verse; *I will yet pray against their wickedness*. 'Tis no less then *Wickedness* to misrepresent things to the highest disadvantage, which are capable of candid meanings, and admit of fair construction.

Let us see then, how *Mark* gave the the Offence, how *Paul* took it; good men both. Good men may *give* Offence, and good men may *take* it; and the *Offence* lie on either side, sometimes on both: on the *givers* part, when he through weakness fails in his Duty: and on the *takers* too, when he is immoderate in his Repentment.

If *Mark* flinch'd from his Ministry, out of any Levity or Inconstancy; this we must acknowledge was a fault for looking back, after he had put his hand to the Plough.

If the *tedium* of the Undertaking, the difficulties and discouragements he met with in the Discharge of it made him withdraw and quit his station, he shew'd himself but a faint Soldier in the service of the Gospel, and deserv'd a mark of Dishonor.

If the preference of any worldly Business call'd him off from his sacred Employ, he might well be looked on by the Apostle as a *Deserter*.

And indeed such is the Inequality of Temper and Unsteadiness of Human Resolutions, such the Irksomeness of religious Duties, and particularly the Disadvantage of the ministerial Function, and such may be also the avocations of secular Concerns, as may render it difficult enough for any one, but who is possessed and actuated by an extraordinary spirit, to carry on the Work against the stream of so many Temptations, where-with it is beset both from without and from within, and to hold out to the end in an even vigorous Course. This was a happiness peculiar to St *Paul* and some others, but could not well be expected from a younger Brother in the Faith, as *Mark* was at this time, And

1 Cor. 4. 3. 4.

1 Cor. 4. 5.

Lev. 19. 17.

Luk. 9. 62.



And yet when we take notice of his *Return*; for he went down with them again, when they went back from the Council at *Jerusalem* to *Antioch*, though he left them before at *Pamphylia*, and doubtless reconciled himself to his *Uncles* good opinion: There was not perhaps reason so to exasperate a *Censure* upon that single desertion, as that he should for ever be abandon'd, thrown out of the Vineyard, and cashiered the Employment.

*Paul* himself was of another opinion in the case of *Onesimus*, who had run away from his Master, whom he sends back with this character; that though he were *in time past unprofitable to him, yet is now, says he, profitable to thee and to me*; and desires him to receive him, as one who upon his conversion came with the advantage of doing him better service. For perhaps, says he, *he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him for ever*. Why could not *Paul* have thought the like of *Mark's* departure from them for a season, that it would be recompenced with the larger services for the time to come? especially being one, of whose serviceableness he had before made some fair tryals. Thus *Demas* afterward upon some worldly occasion, forsook him for a while, as himself complains, having his Merchandise Affairs to look after at *Theſſalonica*, who yet upon his return was readmitted into favour; for so himself, in an *Epistle* he wrote after that, calls him one of his *fellow-labourers*.

Well! but who knows? for *Scripture* is silent as to the occasion of his departing, but that *Mark's* case might be yet more excusable? For if the indisposition of Health was his cause of leaving them; God himself has declared, that he is *for mercy and not for sacrifice*; nor was he perhaps obliged, whatever *Paul's* Commission might be, to expose his life to manifest danger by the Inconvenience of Study and Travel. He that commanded the Ox should not be muzzled, and that, as *St Paul* observes, with a higher meaning to have Ministers provided for, and tells us by the *Wife-man*, that a *righteous man is merciful to his beast*; did never intend sure that his *Ministers* should be treated worse than Juments, to be excruciated with Loads and be allowed no Ease. And 'twere well, if it were but so; that we were to expect *Burdens* only, and not *Blows* into the Bargain. That's grown the general Humour of the World now, that their *Ministers*, as they love to call them, must labour, and look for little but *censure* for their pains.

However were it not so; (for surely in that condition *Paul* himself would have excused him) though he left Them, he did not quit the Work: he so departed from them, as to return to *Jerusalem*: were it his duty to his parent, who dwelled there, and might possibly need his attendance, probably his service in the Ministry too; for she had, as we noted before, a Church of great resort in her house, which became a Sanctuary to *Christians*, both for Shelter and Devotion: I say, had it been only his Duty to Her, had call'd him off from his present Employ, this might have pleaded his Pardon in some measure. *Natural charities* are things avow'd by the God of Nature, and the duty of Children is required and rewarded by him. Now they had dispatched the business, they came about, in *Cyprus*; he could not but think of *Jerusalem*, and was returning in his heart thither, before they set sail from the Island. That City which had been the joy of the whole earth, was dear to him upon many accounts. There was not only his Mother, but the Church, to which he ow'd a Duty. The College of the Apostles at first resided there, and from thence gave out their Orders, as appears from this very Chapter, where we have an account given us of the first *Christian Council*, and *Paul's* and

and Barnabas's being sent from them with Lettres to *Antioch*; *Mark*, as 'tis most likely, accompanying them. Not to say the filial Respect he had for *St Peter* might have some weight, whose Companion he was; no less then *St Pauls*.

Whatever the *Occasion* might be, which the *Text* does not acquaint us with, but leaves us to guess, it is more than probable, that he departed not from them without the leave and liking of his Uncle *Barnabas* at least, and therefore were it a fault in it self, yet considering the Relation he stood in to *Barnabas*, *Paul's* dear Friend, who had at the very first commended him to the acquaintance of the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, where every body was shy of him; went as far as *Tarsus* afterward to look after him, brought him thence to *Antioch*; gave him all the Countenance and Assistance he could at his first Preaching of the Gospel, and had been his Fellow-commissioner twice to *Jerusalem*, his Fellow-traveller and fellow-labourer through several Countries: one would think, this might have been enough to have reconciled him, how justly soever he might be offended before.

Act. 9. 11.

Act. 11. 25.

For methinks I see *St Barnabas* making the same intercession with *Paul* for his Kinsman, as *Paul* himself does with *Philemon* for the run-away Servant, after he has told him the Story of all their mutual Obligations; if therefore thou countest me a partner, receive him as my self. No, all this will not do. *St Paul's* zeal is so high, that rather then have *Mark* in the company, he will break off with his old Friend, and steer another course, And this is our second Head.

Phil. 17.

II. That Good men, who are well enough agreed in right Principles, and the true Ends of the publick Good, yet may so far differ in their Judgment of the Means conducing to those Ends, that they may come to down-right quarrel and contention.

*Barnabas* determin'd for *Mark*, but *Paul* was utterly against him, and the contention grew to that height, the breach came to that width, that they departed asunder one from the other; *Barnabas* taking *Mark* for *Cyprus*, and *Paul* accompanied with *Silas*, going for *Syria* and *Cilicia*.

Why? *Paul* and *Barnabas*, are you in earnest to part now, after having kept company so long together? Shall such a slight Circumstance part you? Was it for this, the Church used so oft to put you in Commission together? that in your high Office you might shew the frailty of Friendship, and in your spiritual Powers and extraordinary Actings discover the common weakness of human nature? Was it for this that the Holy Ghost gave that order concerning you; separate me *Barnabas* and *Saul* for the work, whereunto I have called them? What? that ye might at length upon such a trivial occasion separate from one another, who have been hitherto so solemnly join'd in commission? You that have all along to the advantage of the Gospel acted jointly, will you now to the scandal of it, act separately and go asunder.

Act. 13. 22

Good God! Who could imagine, such a slight instance should produce such peevish dissatisfactions, and untoward ruptures?

Well, but there was some ground for both. *Barnabas* was acted by his affection, *Paul* by his judgment; *Barnabas* carried himself as an Uncle in the business, *Paul* as an Apostle.

I, but could not both have been satisfied with one anothers choice? Might not the matter have been so compromised, that neither should have been displeased? Why might not *Barnabas* have taken *Mark* for his Minister, and *Paul* have *Silas* for his? for it was not sure necessary, that they should have but one betwixt them.

No,

No, it should seem, this would not be endured: the *contention* was so sharp, that they must part. This *new quarrel* so takes them up, that all their *old friendship* is forgotten and laid aside.

*Weak man!* How apt are the Best to be transported with Prejudice and Passion, and to mistake themselves in little things, who are yet sound in the Main, and beyond all Exception?

I might enlarge my Discourse, were it not too great an attempt upon your Patience, in setting forth the *grounds* and *reasons* of this Humor, which is so incident even to the Best of men.

And those to be taken partly.

1. From the *Persons* themselves.
2. From the *Nature of things*.
3. From the *Providence of God*.

1. The *Persons themselves*; the Best of men, are but Men. To be free from Error and Disturbance, from mistake of Judgment or perturbation of Mind, is a felicity proper to the divine Nature, and not competent to any the most pious, the most gracious Soul, while it converses in the flesh.

*First* there's a great *Variety* of Judgments. *Quot homines, tot sententiae*; and in a great *Variety* there must needs be many Mistakes; since All cannot be in the right, indeed but One can.

What is observ'd of *faces*, is as true almost of *opinions*; that there's hardly any one does perfectly in all respects agree with any other. Those that think the same *thing*, are not all led to the same thoughts by the same *reasons*. There are *common notions* implanted in human nature, and interwoven in our very constitution; yet our *conceptions* and *apprehensions* are strangely different even about the same *objects*.

But as 'tis in *faces*; we are not all born *Beauties*, yet 'tis easie to perceive the *features* and *lineaments*, unless very monstrous and distorted, so as to distinguish human countenance, be it never so deformed and irregular, from a *Beast*: so 'tis in our *conceptions*, unless men have by vicious Habits and wicked Customs depraved their Principles and degenerated into Brutality.

This *difference* of apprehending things then is one great cause of peoples quarrel, even when they are in the general agreed upon the thing.

*Barnabas* and *Paul* thus both wished well to the *Church* and the common cause of the Gospel; and yet the *one* determined, and the *other* thought it not good.

And this is that *Epictetus* teaches us, that 'tis peoples *apprehensions* and *opinions* of things (which he calls *δῶγμα*) and not *things* themselves, that make all the disturbance of life.

Again, the *Will* of men do not only accompany their *Judgments*, but are more divided than their *Understandings*, as being too often guided more by *humor* and *interest* than by right reason. *Velle suum cuique est*. Nay, many times the *Will* invades the place, and takes upon it the office of *Reason*. *Stat pro ratione voluntas*, and then there's no convincing of it.

*Paul* considers not *Mark's* Merit and Relation, but remembers his Offence. *Barnabas* on the contrary having forgiven and forgotten his Fault, cannot forget his Alliance and his Service; and in this case, *ceteris paribus*, he may fairly prefer a Kinsman of equal desert before a stranger.

There's another *Vice*, that nature is infected with, *self-love*, that some, most men, like nothing, but what they do themselves, and thereupon are apt to disapprove even of the best and most useful designs for this very reason, that they are proposed and carried on by other hands, and not their own. This as to *Persons*.

2. Then



2. Then as to the *Things*. The *Stoick* tells us every thing hath δύο λαβὰς, *two handles*. Left-handed people take things by the wrong Handle. Indeed the things which most occasion strife and quarrel, are the unnecessary. Things of necessity, to be *pious, just, charitable, temperate*, are Truths, which stare every one in the Conscience like the Sun at noon-day. 'Tis those things, which are either of a more *trivial* or *abstruse* nature, that are contended about.

*Trifles*, that are not worth a quarrel, are apt to breed them; and they have the honor to be consider'd the more, because they are inconsiderable. *Rites* and *Ceremonies* are not sure *Essential* to Religion; and why should we make a hurly-burly and put the World in flames about them? Some will say, 'tis the *Imposers* fault. To answer, though they are not *Essential* to the Being, yet they are requisite to the Well-being of the Church: they are not absolutely necessary This or That, yet necessary they are, *secundum quid*, with respect and in order to decency and Peace. Nor is it fit, in those respects, they should be left at random, for every one to do as they list. Now though they be not essential, yet *Obedience* is an essential part of *Religion*. Nor can he call himself a *Christian*, who does not obey lawful Authority in all things *lawful*; and such are all that are not sinful, and such are all that are not expressly forbidden. Likewise in *dubious* and controvertible things it becomes us in all Christian *humility* to submit our *private* sentiments to *publick* discretion and authority.

*Mysteries*, and deep Points, though in themselves considerable, yet they are not necessary for our study, because undecidable. In *Trifles* no matter on which side Truth lies: in These, which is almost all one, we cannot be sure. And yet these have bred the most quarrels.

*Zeno* an acute and subtle *Philosopher*, made such intricate disputes and shrewd objections against the nature and possibility of *Motion*, that the *Cynick*, who was then present at his *Lecture*, found no better way of confuting him, then by skipping and leaping up and down about the room. 'Tis the like in *Divinity*, as in *Philosophy*: several Points there are, which would admit of everlasting debates, which the more remote they are from understanding, the more every body presumes to discourse them; and the less they concern us, the more apt we are to be concerned for them. These are things, which breed such fewds and animosities, as can never be reconciled, because the things themselves in controversy are in no likelihood of ever being determined. I have a just esteem for Mr. *Calvins* learning and piety; but his *Doctrine of Decrees* (which has so divided the Christian World, that it will hardly ever be united again) with other consequents of that Doctrine, are such, as may sooner afford perpetual matter of quarrel to the learned, then any fair satisfaction and assurance to the pious.

3. But then thirdly, Gods *providence* has a great hand in ordering these differences to a good purpose. He brings order out of our confusions: as the dividing of Tongues was designed to people the World: so it was herein this case; It was needful for the use of the Church that *Barnabas* and *Paul* should separate and go several ways. And this is the *last* thing; of which a word, and I have done.

III. It fared with these Two, as with *Abraham* and *Lot*, when they wanted room for their Flocks; and yet they parted so, as still to retain *charity*. They did not separate into *schism*, or set up divers Churches and several forms of Government. This *St Paul* himself disclaims, to say, *I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos*. They carried the Gospel to places that wanted it, and were recommended whither they went. Though

they disagreed in their private Opinions for the carrying on the Work of the Gospel, yet still they held the same Faith in the unity of the spirit, and in the bond of Peace: I would Those, who find occasion to dissent from the *Church of England* in smaller matters, would manage their Dissents with the like moderation, and not by the study of novelty disturb the Churches Peace in her Establishments,

But what did I say? That things amongst us are established? I pray God they may, and doubt not of the publick Wisdom and Gods Providence notwithstanding some Contests, but they will.

May God of his goodness so unite their Counsels, since they are, I hope, all agreed in the same *End*, that they may agree also upon the *Means*, to the glory of *God*, the benefit of his *Church*, the honour of the King, the welfare of the *People*, and the establishment of our *Peace*, which God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c. *Amen.*

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A Sermon

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# A Sermon upon St. L U K E's Day.

Preached at St. Peters Westminster, Octob. 18. 1674.

## Col. IV. 14.

Luke the beloved Physician and Demas greet you.



*Beloved Christians*; If that which most of those, who handle holy Writings, affirm, be true, That what was written to any of these particular *Churches* or *Persons*, doth by fair proportion belong, and is properly applicable to the whole *Church*, and to every Congregation and Person, that is a member thereof; which the great *Apostle* himself also in several places seems to own: then I may, with confidence of so good Authority, say, that the

Rom. 4. 23.  
1 Cor. 9. 10 &  
10. 11.

*beloved Physician* salutes you; that is, as the *Syriack* Interpreter has more pertinently to the *Physicians* purpose, who was himself a *Syrian*, rendred the word, *Luke asks your health*, Inquires it and Wishes it: for so innocent was his *Practice*, that he desired *None*; and was willing to prevent the need of *Physick* for his friends by his Prayers for their *Health*; which was one thing made him questionless to deserve the Title, the *Apostle* has here bestowed on him, of the *Beloved Physician*.

Do not be startled, that he brings along with him a suspicious person named *Demas*, a wealthy Merchant, and one, who, though he has been groundlessly traduced by many, as a *Renegade* to his Religion, for leaving the *Apostle* some small time upon occasions of his own affairs; yet has been sufficiently vindicated by others more learned, and we shall, ere we have done, say something to clear his Reputation, that his company may be no disparagement to St. *Luke* our blessed *Evangelist* and *beloved Physician*. Luke the beloved Physician and Demas greet you.

Where we have to consider,

1. The *Evangelist's* Name; *Luke*.
2. His Profession or Employment *in seculo*; *the Physician*.
3. The obliging Character of his Profession; *the beloved Physician*. Or rather, as I think, from the Propriety of the *Greek*; his Church-relation, as a *Christian*, as an *Evangelist*: ὁ ἰατρος, ὁ ἀγαπητός, *the Physician, the Beloved*, that is, as he is elsewhere styled by this very *Apostle*, *the brother*, his *fellow-traveller*, and *fellow-labourer* in the Work of the Gospel.
4. His Companion, that is here and elsewhere join'd with him; *Demas*.
5. Their Civility and Christian affection; *they greet you*.

Philem. 24.

Of these we shall endeavor to speak so orderly and profitably, that together with the *Commemoration* of the *Saint*, we shall interweave some useful *Remarks* for our own *Instruction*.



I. Of his *Name*, because that is a meer *Grammatical* nicety, I shall not say much. *Drusus* tells us, that some have in vain sought for the original of it in his own Country among the *Syrians*; and like enough And himself gives us his opinion, that he was called from *Lucius*, *Λουκῆς*, and that *a Luce*; as from *Rufus* we read *Ρωφῆς*. And so *Epaphras* by contraction is the same with *Epaphroditus*; and this *Demas*, it may be, the same as that *Demetrius*, 3 *Joh.* 12. who was well reported among the brethren; and some other names there are of the like stamp. I shall not gainsay that Learned persons conjecture, (though I have one of my own to offer) seeing the reason of the name, taken, as he gives it, from *light*, doth so excellently well besit our *Evangelist*, for the brightness of his Parts, and the elegance of his Style; as being an *Illuminator*, a Limner with his *Pen*, as well as his *Pencil*.

But if I may have leave to guess too; since 'tis more then probable, that the name is of a *Latin* descent, and we meet with one *Lucius* of *Cyrene*, reckoned among the Prophets and Teachers, *Act.* 13. 1. who is also mentioned *Rom.* 16. another from our *St Luke*; we do affirm, that without the help of a *Greek* diminution, the word *Lucas* of it self is a true *Latin* word, being a denominative from *Lucania*, a Country of *Italy*, and used by good Authors; whence Elephants for being first seen in those parts were by them called *Lucæ boves*.

Now though *St Luke* were a *Syrian*, yet it was very usual for the Eastern Nations, after they were made Provincial to *Rome*, to put on *Roman* names, whatever names they might have before, to ingratiate themselves with the conquering people, and to testify their freedom, or to render themselves perhaps by that means the more capable of Infranchisement: Thus we read of *John*, by an Hebrew name, *Barnabas* his sisters Son, whose Sirname was *Mark* a *Latin* name, *Act.* 15 37. *John* the name given him at his Circumcision; *Mark*, a name I suppose taken up after, whether in compliance with the *Romans*, or at his conversion to Christianity. Thus *Paul* himself, formerly called *saul*; whether at his Circumcision he had two names given him, as *Origen* says, one Hebrew as a *Jew*; the other *Latin*, as born in a City of the *Roman* freedom; which if it had been, he would surely, when he pleaded that freedom before the Captain, have then made known his *Roman* name too, as a confirmation of it; or whether at his Baptism he was so nam'd by *Ananias*, as *St Ambrose* saith, or at his Conversion, as *St Austin* will have it, he changed his own name, to shew at once the humility of his mind and the littleness of his stature; or rather, as *St Jerom* rightly gathers from the Text, he were so called from his converting *Sergius Paulus* the Deputy of the Island; for all along from his own Conversion *Act.* 9. to that passage his style is *Saul*, and then he is first called *Paul*, *Act.* 13. 9. and ever after goes by that name in the *Acts*, and names himself so in his *Epistles*.

*St Luke* then, of whose very name we find no mention all along in the History of *St Paul*, till he comes to *Rome*, in those *Epistles* he sends thence, might accordingly, having had another name before, take up this new one, when he came with *Paul* to *Rome*, to oblige the *Italians*, of whom mention is made in the close of the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews*, and amongst whom no question but *St Luke*, by *St Paul's* order, was conversant in preaching the Gospel.

Whether upon this ground *Popes*, when they climb the Chair once, alter their names, and even the ordinary *Priests* change theirs, when they list themselves into any religious Order, matters not. Certainly these do  
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*Act.* 21. 39 &  
22. 27.

it not upon such honest design; for this shifting of names must needs be to the *Priests*, when they are sent abroad, no inconsiderable advantage in the secure practice of their Equivocations: whereas these *primitive Teachers*, besides some civil reasons for their so doing, touched at before, if they did it for any other reason at any time, they did it not for their own concealment, but for the inearment of the people by an innocent compliance with their customs and appellations. This for his *Name*.

II. As to his *Profession* and secular practice, to which he had been bred, and wherein he was employ'd, both before and likely after his turning *Christian*, he was a *Physician*, nay the *Physician*; where the *Article* doth not, as *Erasmus* seems to intimate, serve for distinction, as if this *Luke* the *Physician* were not the same with the *Evangelist*, but is put by way of *eminency*, that he was an excellent person in that skill; or possibly that at that time he was the only person among the *Christians* of that Character.

And here consider with me the wise contrivances of Gods Providence for his Church, how from time to time he has always picked and culled out choice and fit Instruments for the carrying on of Gospel-work; and in this sense it is, that St *Paul* is called a *chosen vessel*, not so much in respect of Gods eternal Election, as in regard of his usefulness and fitness to that service God had design'd him; that, according to the *Hellenistical idiom*, he was ἐκλεκτόν σκεῦος, one that would make a choice instrument in Gods hand for the propagation of *Christian* faith and the building up of the Church. Act. 9. 15

Now whereas at first it was somewhat necessary for him to make use of illiterate and unlikely Persons, whose Education had been no way suitable to the purposes of instructing people, nor their Interests in the World such, as might recommend them to the government of Societies; the Offices of the Church mainly resolving themselves into these two heads of governing and teaching; I say it was necessary at first, that such persons should be made use of; that it might appear to the World, that the Doctrine and Design of *Christianity* proceeded not from men, but came immediately from God himself, who did thus attest it with Miracles, and enable the Preachers of it with Power from above, with such a *spirit* as might far transcend all the ways and sects of humane *Philosophy*, and all the most exquisite attainments of the most advanced *Reason*, by furnishing his instruments with extraordinary gifts and miraculous endowments. Yet this Method was not to continue long; nor is God obliged, nor is he wont to work unnecessary Miracles.

Wherefore when the Gospel had been now proclaimed, and own'd, and had gain'd Profelytes up and down in other Countries as well as in *Judea*; when the Church was in some settlement and probability of flourishing, and that there was now no much longer need of Miracles, which were only intended for the conviction of Unbelievers; it pleas'd God to apply to ordinary Means, by degrees to call in human Aids, and to consecrate the advantages of Literature and good Education, and of worldly Interest too, to the service of his Church; by taking in such Persons, as either by their great Abilities or worthy Examples might both promote and adorn the *Christian* Profession.

See then and wonder with me at the absurdity of those, who decry *Human Learning*, looking upon it not only as needless, but dangerous to Religion; whereas there is no other more probable way left of preserving and securing it; the *Holy Scriptures* themselves, which are the great Instrument of our Religion, being not to be understood without the helps and

and studies of *Languages, History, Philosophy, natural, moral, and metaphysical*; the *Arts of Speech and Eloquence*; in a word all kinds of good *Literature* and useful *Knowledge*.

Behold and wonder with me at the audaciousness of those, who having never saluted the *Schools* of the Prophets, from off their Shopboards jump into the *Chairs* of *Teachers* (shall I say) or *Scorners*, and being utter strangers to *Humanity*, boldly undertake *Divinity*; as if, poor Souls, they imitated herein the first Preachers of the Gospel, who though they were *Fishermen* and the like, yet were men divinely inspired.

If they pretend to divine *Commission*, which They had, they must prove it and make it good by such extraordinary *gifts* and *graces*, as They were indued with. Can they speak *Languages*? Can they work *Miracles*, as they did? If they cannot, the pretence to their example is madness and presumptuous vanity.

We do acknowledge still the gracious *Assistance* of the *Blessed Spirit*, going along with us in the use of our *Knowledges* and acquired *Parts*; but we dare own no such thing as *Inspiration*, to infuse these abilities into us without our own pains and study for their acquisition.

Those, who came immediately after the *Apostles* in the primitive *Church*, did not commence *Divines* at this wild rate. They were men well principled, and thoroughly seasoned in all kinds of useful *Learning*, who had duly prepared themselves with study, that they might be able to maintain the *Truths* and *Orders* of the *Church* in the ages they lived in, against the attempts and insolencies of growing *schisms* and *heresies*, and transmit them, when they had done, to posterity in their learned *Writings*, and elaborate *Works*.

Such was St *Paul*, though miraculously converted, a great *Scholar*, bred at the feet of *Gamaliel*, profoundly vers'd in all *Jewish* Antiquity, a man of great parts and indefatigable industry, and impregnated with such a brave spirit and zeal for the Christian Cause, as rendred him the greatest *Master* of *sacred Eloquence*.

Such was St *Luke* his follower and *amanuensis*, though inspired in what he wrote, yet qualified beforehand for his undertakings by a large acquaintance with *History*, and an excellent command of his *Greek* Pen, besides his skill in *Physick*, which was so fair an ingredient towards his accomplishment, that here he goes by the style of *Luke the Physician*.

And this *Character* certainly gave him no mean Advantage, not onely in the exercise of his *Ministry* by an acceptable Address and easie admission, which men of that *Profession* every where find among persons of any civility; but even to his understanding of Christian *Truths*, and to the apprehending the *Mysteries* of *Faith*.

For having, as that study directed him, gone orderly over all the links of that Chain, by which *natural causes* are mutually tied to one another, till he found *God* the supreme Cause and first Mover at the top; having traced the footsteps of divine *goodness* through all the most minute productions of his Handmaid *Nature*; and yet finding human Reason puzzled, and at a loss, in giving an account of his Almighty *Power* and infinite *Wisdom* in the least and meanest of his Works; with what pious humility must he needs entertain *supernatural Truths*, when upon tryal he had found every, the plainest thing in common nature it self was *mystery*: and saw he had as much reason for his believing these proposals of *faith*, as he had for trusting the operations of *sense* or the collections of *reason* it self.

I know there is an unworthy Reproach cast upon this excellent Study, that



that it inclines men to *Atheism*. 'Tis true, the Ignorance and Corruption of men, that profess any of the three honourable *Faculties*, bring scandal upon the faculty it self: Again, *Sciolists* and half-witted men are those that discredit any *Science* they meddle with. But he that pretends to the noble skill of *Physick*, and dares to deny that, which doth continually *incurrere in sensus*, that which in all his researches and experiments he must meet with at every turn, I dare to say, he is no *Physician*; or at least that he doth at once give his *Profession* and his *Conscience* too the lye.

I appeal to that great Man of the Profession, *Galen*, in his pious Treatise *De usupartium*: where, though there may be some Mistakes, which later *Anatomy* has found out and rectified, yet they are to be excused upon this account, that the *Ancients* prefer'd a modest Ignorance before that which might seem to them a cruel Curiosity; and taking perhaps the *dissection* of human bodies to be an inhuman violation of *Nature*, contented themselves with cutting up those Creatures, which had nearest resemblance to man in the situation of their parts. I am ashamed almost to name what those Creatures were, (*Good God!* What are these bodies of ours, that we should be proud of them?) They were *Swine* and *Monkeys*.

I do not speak this to condemn our later Practice as Unlawful; because this lump of flesh, when the Soul is once gone, is not properly any longer *Man*: and further, this way of Carnage hath proved very beneficial to Mankind, by making rare discoveries to the great advantage of the *Art of Health*. For since we, who live in the dregs of Time, have multiplied our *Diseases* according to our *Vices*, such both of them as were not known to the *Ancients*, whose ignorance is the more excusable, that what they wanted in *skill*, they had in *virtue*; I say since 'tis thus, all the Courses, that *Physic* can take for its Improvements, are little enough to answer those necessities, our sins have brought upon us, not only as just Punishments, but as natural Effects.

I shall not go about to harangue in praise of this noble *Science of Medicine*, which the Wise man bids us *Honour*, but only speak of it, as my subject leads me, so as it may conduce to *Religion* and *Piety*: which as on the one hand in its rational Inquiries it disposes the *Professor* to an acquiescence in matters of *Faith*, so on the other hand in its Applications may assist the *Patient* to the attainment of *Good Manners*.

These *Students of Nature* prove sometimes happy *Masters of Morality*, who can prevail more upon a rebellious Affection by one of their *doses* than the severest *Philosophers* can with all their *Precepts* and *Lectures*; and can cure the *distempers* of the *Mind* by altering the *humors* of the *Body*. They will prescribe *Temperance* for a rule of Health; they will assure you, that your *Passion* will do your self more hurt than your adversary, and that forgiveness is a necessary charity to him out of kindness to your own *body* as well as *soul*. To make short, they can persuade men to lead a *Christian* life, that they may prolong their *natural* one.

And without doubt such a worthy *Physician* was our *St Luke*, that made use of his *Art* to all instances of *Piety* and *Virtue*: so far was he from offending against any of those *Engagements*, the Sons of *Art* are tied to in *Hippocrates* his *Oath*, that he own'd a higher Obligation, and made his *Profession* subservient to *Christianity*.

And to this end certainly was the gift of *healing*, we read of design'd, with which the *Apostles* and their *Evangelists* too, whom they sent up and down to preach in their stead, were furnished; and of which we may be sure *St Luke* had his share; that there might be fairer Impressions and deeper

Act. 10. 38.

Psal. 36. 6.

deeper Convictions wrought upon peoples *minds* from those saving Experiences of health, they found upon their *bodies*. And this was our *Saviours* own practice, to go about *teaching* and *doing good*, to recommend his *doctrine* by his *cures*, and to oblige people by saving them from their *sicknesses* to save themselves from their *sins*; that so he might be a compleat *Saviour* both of *soul* and *Body*, according to that of the *Psalmist*, *Thou savest both man and beast*; *Man*, that's the rational part, the *Soul*; and *Beast*, that's the brutish part, the *Body*.

And now, *blessed Luke*, thou having all these Advantages, which either the study of *Nature* or the practice of *Art* could afford thee, how *blessed* did'st thou make all people, and how *beloved* thy self, wherever thou cam'st, attended thus with thy own happy *genius* and Gods miraculous *gift* to boot, which secured thy success, when thou scattered'st health as a *Physician*, and salvation as a *Preacher*, through all the Countries round about.

We cannot but take notice of another ingenuity, which *Tradition* has bestowed upon our *Evangelist*, that he was an excellent Limner or *Painter*; and if the lucky Hands of some famed *Artists* have been valued at so high a rate, that their Pieces have been judged worth any money; what would be given by those, who affect such curiosities, for some of *St Luke's* original draughts?

That he was a *Virtuoso* in that kind too, as well as in *History* and *Physick*, I am the more apt to believe, not onely in veneration to *Antiquity*, who has so reported him, but from ocular *Demonstration*, when I look upon his florid descriptions, particularly how graphically and to the life he sets forth the *tempest* and *shipwrack*, *Act. 27.* as if he had drawn them in colours, to hang up (as the manner was) in *Neptunes* temple. And 'tis my wonder that the *Church of Rome*, where *St Luke* was so long conversant, has no rarity of his in this kind to show, were it but the Picture of his Patron *St Paul*, whom he so long accompanied in his Travels; or at least why they did not think it as pious and necessary a fraud to produce some such counterfeit, as to impose upon our easie faith things far more incredible, such as the travel of our Ladies house from *Bethlehem* to *Loretto*. Such a Relique might have stood them in some stead to countenance their *Image-worship*.

Jer. 10. 8.

But alas! this is a thing that *Scripture* and *Antiquity* have been wanting in, who lookt upon *stocks* to be but *Doctrines of vanities*. The *Apostles* did not so teach *Christ*, nor have we so learnt him. If *Christ* had intended, that Himself or his *blessed Mother* should be worshipped in that manner, the Age, wherein they lived, abounded with ingenious Artists both in *Painture* and *Sculpture*, as appears by *Pliny* in his *Natural History*, where he reckons up great store of them; and the *Church* of that time reckons up great store of them; and the *Church* of that time would have been so careful, that we should not have wanted necessary furniture for our devotions.

But that, which raises my indignation most, is, that the *Romanists* themselves have not that care, they should have, in the choice and preparation of these Objects or Helps of their Worship. For a lewd Pencilman or Stonecutter to take some beautiful Wanton, and out of the adulterous features of a noted *Courtesan* to copy out the amiable Innocences of the *blessed Virgins* countenance, makes the *Idolatry* of those, who set her up in this *Mascarade* for adoration, to become ridiculously abominable.

But we have said too much perhaps of this, and enough at least of *St Luke's*

*Luke's secular Profession*, that he was a *Physician*; 'tis time, we now speak of his *spiritual Relation*, as a member and Officer of the Christian Church. For though we do readily acknowledge, he might be beloved as a *Physician*; *the beloved Physician*: yet *beloved*, is not here ἡγαπημένος, a *participle*, but ἀγαπῆλος, a *noun*, as St *Hierom* has observed, and stands apart as a distinct character of it self, *the Physician, the Beloved*; and has another useful and usual notion, as it signifies one related to us in Church-fellowship, and as he is called 2 *Cor.* 8. *the brother*.

III. There is, at least ought to be, *love among brethren*. Not to speak of the ties of *nature, country*, other relations, which are so many instances of *brotherhood* and persuasives of *love*; we are properly and truly such, *brethren* as to Religion. We have one and the same *Father*; so Christ has taught us to pray *Our Father*, and so himself at mention of his departure avers it, *I go to my father and to your Father*; and thus we are *Christ's brethren* too. Again we have one and the same *mother* the *Church*; for if we leave and disown her, we loose our right to our father too, and thus we are *Christ's members*, as he is Head of his body the *Church*. These are great Arguments for *love*, that we are children of one *Father*, and fellow-members of one *Body*. And therefore *Christ* has made *love* the very badge and cognizance of his religion. By this, says he, *shall all men know, that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another*. Joh. 20. 17.

Blessed Lord, if this be the character and mark of discipleship, how few *disciples* hast thou left in the World? if this be the *κρίσιον*, and tryal of a Christian, God forgive us, what's become of our Christianity?

O help me a little to bemoan the *divisions* and consequently the *decays* of Religion amongst us; now that a foolish and uncharitable zeal has taken up the room of a true Christian *love*; and contrary to all duty and reason, we make that the ground of our animosities, our Religion, which ought to be the main argument and highest obligation of our brotherly love and union.

To return to our *beloved Physician*; he was no ordinary *brother* of the common rank, but one who had peculiar reasons to make him *beloved*. Hear what St *Paul* says of him in that 2 *Cor.* 8. 18. *the brother, whose praise is in the Gospel throughout all the Churches*: by which, say Interpreters, is to be meant his *preaching* of the Gospel, for which he was so generally commended; but yet it must not be confined to so narrow a sense, as to exclude his *writing* of the Gospel; though perhaps at that time not made publick, since the words will well bear that sense too, *who is praised for the Gospel*. For he was an *Evangelist* in both senses, an admirable *Preacher*, and an incomparable *Writer* of the Gospel.

But having said so much of the *Physician*, we shall want time to speak of the *Evangelist*; seeing that part of his character would alone take up a just discourse; nor must we be so injurious either to his *vertues*, as to think to comprize them all in one hours compass, or to your *patience*, as to extend them to a larger allowance of time. And besides, as we have hitherto address'd our selves to St *Luke*, so we ought not wholly to neglect his companion *Demas*.

IV. *Luke* and *Demas* both greet you; and so they are join'd in one common remembrance to *Philemon*, but with more company; *Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow-labourers*. He stands there under a fair character, nor will *Luke* be ashamed of his and the Apostles fellow-laborer. vers. 24.

I know he is charged in the *Epistle* of the Day, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. for *forsaking the Apostle and loving this present world*. Why! he might *forsake the Apostle*, and yet not quit his *Christianity* and renounce his faith; he might



so far love this present world, as to go home and take order about his worldly affairs; he might depart to *Thessalonica*, a noble Mart-Town to look after his Merchandize, and yet return to *Rome*, and serve *Paul* and the *Gospel* again, and not disserve them neither, while he was absent, in that other place whither he was gone for a time. And so *Grotius*, no mean man in interpreting of Scriptures, judges he did.

It was a fault then, that he deserted *Paul* and his *ministry*, for that time; but he repented, he came back, he removed his effects to *Rome*, and returned into *St Pauls* attendance and his favour too. The whole stress of *Demas* his case lies upon this, whether that Epistle to *Timothy* were writ before this to the *Colossians*, and that to *Philemon*. If so, *Demas* is clear, that he returned to his duty, which *St Paul* complains he had forsaken. And that it was so, one reason offers it self to me upon haste by the By. There he bids *Timothy* bring *Mark* along with him, and in that to *Philemon*, he mentions *Mark* together with *Demas*, which is an argument that *Mark* was come, and so that the Epistle to *Philemon* was after that to *Timothy*. Nay *Mark* himself had been tardy in the same fault as *Demas* was, having left the *Apostle* in *Pamphylia*; which he so highly resented, that rather then take the deserter along with him, he fell out with *Barnabas*, and parted with both Uncle and Kinsman; and yet, ye see, was afterwards reconciled.

It is no better then malice, so to censure any man taken in a fault, and run him down for a slight miscarriage, as not to give him leave to rise again and recover himself by repentance; as most Interpreters have hitherto served poor *Demas*. Let *Demas* and me be humbled under the sense of our sins, but let not by-standers proudly insult over us, when we are down. Others miscarriages should make us reflect upon our own, so that exercising the severity (of caution at least) upon our selves, we may reach out a hand of charity to them, to help them up again. And this as our *Christianity* mainly obliges us to, so 'tis no more then common civility requires at our hands; which is our next and last Stage.

V. *Luke* and *Demas* salute you. Salutation was a point of civility, used, as by *Heathens*, so by *Christians* too. It is no design of *Religion* to make the professors of it rude or sullen.

It was the Custom of the Primitive times, to end their publick Offices with mutual salutations; they embraced and kist, with a *Pax vobiscum*, Peace be with you; whence this kiss is called by *Tertullian*, an ancient Writer, *signaculum orationis*, the seal and close of the Churches prayers. Upon which account it was, that *St Paul* concludes all his *Epistles* with the salutations of their friends abroad, before he dismisses them with a blessing, and gives order that, after the reading of them, they should salute one another with a holy kiss. But this Custom, as it was familiarly practised also by the *Heathens* in their common meetings, and was for the trouble of it and other inconveniences forbidden by *Tiberius*, so was not long retained in the Church, as the *Annalist* informs us.

Gen. 23. 7.

Look back upon *Old Testament* times. *Abraham* a great man, and a great Saint, bows himself to the people of the Land, even to the Children of *Heth*. These were men of another Religion, and probably much his inferiours too in quality and estate; yet he scruples not to afford them the ordinary civility and complement of the *Eastern* Countries.

And shall any *Christian* grudge his due respects to a *superiour* by pulling off his Hat, and the like received fashions in *Europe*.

Scripture is the rule of faith and good manners. It teaches us then no more to be unmannerly, then it does to be infidels. I but 'tis belike an idolatrous

*idolatrous* ceremony. Strange times we have lived to see, when decency in the service of God must be term'd *superstition*, and *civility* to our betters must upon pretence of conscience be laid aside as a piece of *idolatry*.

I have but one *note* more, which comes home to the *day*, and I have done. 'Tis civil to *salute*, 'tis as uncivil not to salute again; *salutem non refutare*. We have this morning according to the Churches appointment returned St. Luke's *salutation*; I hope, to Gods praise, and somewhat to our own benefit.

*Holy-days*, I confess, are but the Churches institutions. What then? Are they ere a whit the less to be observed? Or would you have an express command of Scripture for it? If this be it, I am afraid, if we meet with a peevish Opponent, that will demand *Scripture* for every thing we do, we must not serve God at all. For we must serve him at some *time* or other, in some *place* or other, and after some *form* or other; and where will you find *precept* for all or any of these?

To limit our selves to the circumstance of *time*, which is our present business, I fear the *Lords day* it self will be in some danger, if we must be obliged to produce a direct *command* out of Gods word for it. If we will not stand to the Churches authority and practice for these and many other things, where *scripture* has not determined plainly, I foresee nought but confusion; for when that pale is once broken down, there's no end of disputing; which is the reason of our so many *divisions*, because the minds of people are not bound up in one common obedience; and when once they have departed from their *obedience* to the Church, they quickly throw away that *love* they owe to their fellow-Christians, and that *reason* too, by which they should guide themselves.

Let us, as becomes good *Christians* in duty to the *Church*, to God and our selves too, commemorate the holy *lives*, and vertuous *actions*, the constant *sufferings* and precious *deaths* of Gods *saints* and *Servants*, that have gone before us; and beg of God his grace, that we may make that use of those advantages, they have left us, in their *labours*, in their *writings*, in their *examples*, that as we do profess to believe the *communion of saints* here; we may be admitted into the society and happy estate of those *Blessed ones* hereafter. *Amen.*

# A Sermon upon St. *Philip* and St. *Jacob's* Day,

Preached at St. *Peter's Westminster*, May the 1. 1667.

## John I. 46. *Come and see.*



His *Day* has ever been, from before our *Saviours* time, early in the *Heathen* ages, a day of *sights* and *shewes*; and Those are things, people are so readily taken with, that they render *Invitation* needless. Yet here we have an *Apostle* inviting us abroad, to make our *walks* and *visits* warrantable, if we bestow our selves according to his direction. But before we set forth, good manners require of us to take some notice of our *Guide* and *Entertainer*. And *Philip* saith unto him, *Come and see.*

Joh. 14. 8.

Joh. 12. 20,  
21.

Joh. 6. 7.

This *Philip* was one of the *senior Apostles* reckon'd in all the *Rolls* the *fifth*; as having been called on the very morrow after *S. Peter* ver. 43. and his *Townsmen* too, ver. 44. Our *Evangelist* has done him the honour of his *History*, while the rest do but name him. First for his converting *Nathanael* here, by ocular demonstration; who had been made an *Apostle* too, had not he been a *Doctor* of the *Law*, as the *Greek Father* gives the reason. Then for his desiring our *Lord* in the *Gospel* of the day, that he would shew them the *Father*; Again for introducing some *Greeks*, that were come to *Jerusalem* to worship at the feast, to see *Jesus*. All this is business of *sight*, and pertinent to the day. One passage more there is, that shews him an indifferent good *Accomptant*; wherein *Christ* meant to prove his *Faith*, not his *Arithmetick*; where he guesses *two hundred pennyworth* of bread would not be sufficient for *five thousand* people, That sum in our *Coin* amounting to *six pounds five shillings*, it would have come to but *three* of our half-penny loaves to *five*; and the *Miracle* no question outdid that scant proportion.

Luk. 3. 1.

There is another *Philip* the *Deacon*, whose praise is in the *Acts*, who was formerly remembred too upon this very Day; the 8th *Chapter* of the *Acts* having been appointed out of course for his sake to be the *second lesson*: into the room whereof hath been since taken that part of *John* where the Text stands; He was famous for converting *Samaria*, and the *Aethiopian Queen Candace's* Lord Treasurer. He is called *Philip the Evangelist* *Act. 21. 8, 9.* and said to have *four daughters* Prophetesses, which four daughters there want not some, who would father upon the *Apostle Philip*, making him the *Evangelist*, though it be expressly said in that place, he was *one of the seven*, *Act. 6. 5.* (*Deacons* he means) and not *one of the twelve Apostles*. But so uncertain and lame have some Authors been in these accounts, that 'tis strange some one or other of them had not stumbled upon *Philip the Tetrach* too.

Besides, our *S. Philip*, as he has had a Name-sake in the *Lessor*, so he has a Colleague, *S. James*, in the *Epistle* of the day written by himself: though as many of the *Ancients* did for a while question the authority of that *Epistle*; so some still question the *Author* of it, guessing it rather to have



have been the other *James* the son of *Zebedee*; because in the *Inscription* they do not meet with his usual cognisance, the *brother of our Lord*; not minding that he purposely declined the envy of that Title, and stiled himself *servant*; taking it (as indeed it is) for the more honourable Badge of the two; which modesty we may also observe in *S. Jude*, who calls himself *the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James*.

This *James* to distinguish him from the other *Apostle* of the same name, is called *James the son of Alphaeus*; which *Alphaeus* was the same, I suppose, as *Cleophas*; for *Mary the mother of James* is by *S. John* called *Mary the wife of Cleophas*; unless you will with the *Arabick* version supply the *ἡ τῆς Κλωπᾶ* thus, *the daughter of Cleophas*. This *James* is also called *James the Less*, that is, the other *James's Junior* in *Apostleship*; and *James the brother*, that is, near Kinsman of our Lord, and He was Bishop of *Jerusalem*, and President of the Council there, *Act. 15.* (after the other *James* the brother of *John*, had been cut off by an early Martyrdom with the sword *Act. 12. 2.*) one whom the people had in that veneration, that they surnam'd him *Jacobus Justus*; though some would make this a third *James*, and place him in the See of *Jerusalem*; as thinking it a derogation for an *Apostle* to be a Bishop, whereas indeed *Episcopacy* immediately succeeded into the *Apostolical Chair* and dignity.

But to reckon up and reconcile all the contradictory mistakes of Writers about this *Apostle*, and to give account, how these Two came join'd into one Commemoration; why not rather *Philip* and *Bartholomew*, as usually coupled; or *Philip* and *Thomas*, as they are set down in the *Acts*, and here met in this days Gospel; wherein each of them takes his turn to ask their Master a question: whereas these two *Philip* and *Jacob* or *James*, neither agree in the time, nor in the manner or place of their death, One being crucified and pelted to death with stones at *Hierapolis* in the fifty fourth year of Christ, the Other thrown off a pinnacle of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and knockt on the head in the fall with a fullers club, in the year sixty three. This were a Task would take up more then an hours allowance. Wherefore I pass from the *Saints* of the day to the *Business* of the day; Come and see.

*Sight*, as 'tis the noblest, so 'tis the most curious and most certain of all our Senses. The soul may take up her Lodging in the Ears; but her delight and satisfaction is to be at the Window, and to look out at the Casement of the Eye, and there inform her self what passes. Any strange sight is a quick alarm to her curiosity. I think I may, with *Interpreters* leave, call this the lust of the eyes, which are not satisfied with seeing; whilst most of our time and busiest inquiries are taken up with (that, which our baptismal vow obliges us against) acting or beholding the pomps and vanities of this (the Church bids me call it wicked) World. Nay peradventure, some there are, who make their addresses to the Church it self, upon no other errand, then what they go to Park or Theatre for, to see and to be seen. And the preachers of the Gospel are even in this milder sense *Θεατρῶμενοι*, brought upon the Stage, and made a Spectacle to the world and a gazing stock.

And 'tis well if they will come any how, and be taken by the Eye, if they will not be drawn in by the Ear: for here we find the *Apostle Philip* making it the first Essay of his *Apostolical function* to work over honest and learned *Nathanael* to the Christian faith, by converting him to come and see, such a sight and so seen, as *Nathanael* never repented his coming to see it.

Saint

Jam. 1. 1.

Mat. 13. 55.

1 Cor. 9. 5.

Mat. 10. 3.

Mar. 16. 1.

Joh. 19. 25.

Mar. 15. 40.

Gal. 1. 19.

Luk. 6. 14.

Act. 1. 13.

Joh. 14. 5, 8.

Joh. 2. 16.

Eccl. 1. 8.

1 Cor. 4. 9.

Saint *Philip* had himself newly received the gracious favour of a heavenly Call, ver. 43. *Christ* meets with *Philip*, and says to him, *Follow me*. *Philip* presently meets with *Nathanael*, and tells him the news of the *Messias*, ver. 45. *We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph*. *Nathanael* straight objects the vulgar Misprision of the place, even to a proverbial reproach, in this 46. verse, *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* *Philip* backs his Invitation, and answers that Objection with an expression as proverbial as that, and more generally used, *Come and see*.

Rev. 6. 1, 3,  
5, 7.

I would call this *St. Philip's* Apophthegm; but that I find that beloved Disciple has, by a particular delight in it, made it his own; for in his *Revelation* at the opening of the four first seals he makes the four living creatures, which, all are agreed, were the four *Evangelists*, one after another, utter the same words, *Come and see*; and brings in the *Lamb* himself, ver. 39. of this Chapter, inviting *Andrew* and the other Disciple of the *Baptist* in this very *paræmial* form too, *Come and see*.

These words then, as you might easily perceive by the *Context*, have a threefold Reflection upon the foregoing passages, and require our proportionable Consideration.

I. As an *Answer* or reply to *Nathanael's* Objection, grounded upon a popular Prejudice, *Can any good come from Nazareth?* COME AND SEE.

II. As an *Inforcement* of his own *Invitation* to the knowledge of *Christ*, and an *Improvement* of it to an experimental Acquaintance. *We have found the Messias*. COME AND SEE.

III. As an *Eccho* rebounding from his own *Call*, and an immediate *Effect*, resulting from an active Principle of grace newly implanted in him; *Jesus* had said to him but just before, *Follow me*; and he meeting with *Nathanael*, brings him in too, with a COME AND SEE.

I. First then we are to consider it as an *Answer* to a vulgar prejudice, fastned upon the place, that no good was to be expected from *Nazareth*; and by consequence upon the person, that this *Jesus of Nazareth* could not be such an one as *Philip* took him for.

The *Philosopher* has observ'd that the Common people are γωμοτῶνται, coyners of proverbs; and they show the *Satyr* of their Wit in no one thing more, then in *National Characters*, drawing black lines over whole Countrys. I need not mention the famed *Greek* proverb of the three *Kappas*; Κατὰ δόκει, Καρπες, Κίλινες, One will serve our turn, that *Scripture* helps us to. The *Cretan* Poet might have been question'd for his own truth in that verse, wherein he brands his Countrymen; καὶ πάντες αἰεὶ ψεύονται, The *Cretians* are always lyars; had not the *Apostle* canoniz'd him in this saying for a *Prophet*; and under his own hand ingaged for the truth of this assertion, *This Witness*, says he, is true. Indeed we are too too apt commonly to censure the vices of other *Nations*, which we are no less apt our selves to imitate and outdo. What *Grotius* observes of several sects of *Philosophers*; that no one sect ingross all the Truth, nor any one mist of a share, is as true of several *Nations*, that no one in their temper or management is so clearly and exactly good, but has faults and failings; no one again so extremely bad, but has some things very commendable, which may well deserve our emulation. But this *Censure* sticks not here, but reaches down to *Families*; the *Obloquy* extending it self even to particular *Persons* and *Things*.

Tit. 1. 13.

The Doctors of *Judaea* had it should seem excommunicated all *Galilee*, and

and confin'd that Spirit, which bloweth where it listeth, within the limits of their own Country. They lookt upon *Galilee*, as out of the pale of the Church. The *Pharises* say to *Nicodemus*, Search and look, for out of *Galilee* ariseth no Prophet: and the very People had got it by the end; shall *Christ*, say they, come out of *Galilee*? So then if the *Messias* himself come from *Nazareth*; if his holy *Apostles* be *Galileans*; they shall meet with Reproaches instead of Venerations.

Joh. 3. 8.

Joh. 7. 52.

Joh. 7. 41.

See further still the perverseness even of good men in this point. They also *hunc errorem errarunt*. Our Saviour came from *Nazareth*, a city of *Galilee*; and *Nathanael* himself was of *Cana*, another town of *Galilee* (as this *Evangelist* informs us *Chap. 21. ver. 2.*) and at no great distance neither; yet he entertains a prejudice against the *Nazarene*. Thus is even the honest and ingenuous part of the world byassed and forestalled by wrong opinions. We rate things, and we cry persons up or down, according as we are prepossessed. And it is hard for us to be convinced of these our misprisions; possession being eleven points of reason as well as law, against the true title of Desert; and the fancied Idea within, we have taken up already, keeping out the real representations of worth, which are offered to the understanding from without.

Yet this however may be said in favour of Prejudice, that it many times is not so unkind an adversary as Expectation is; unless there be an ingredient of malice in it: for whereas Expectation, by eating up the performance beforehand, lessens and abates the value of it; a weak Prejudice doth often, like *Solomon's* buyer; though it beats down the Market at first, crying 'Tis naught 'tis naught, yet makes a good bargain upon tryal, and goes away very well satisfied. *Herod* had had a longing desire to see our Saviour, with a wonderful expectation of some miracle; and found nothing worth his admiration, but, as he prophanely thought, the simplicity of the man. *Nathanael* comes with a prejudice, expecting no great matter, and is surpris'd with Divinity.

Prov. 20. 14.

Luk. 23. 8.

Thus Tryal often convinces report of falshood, and gives fame the lye, when that snow-ball of mistakes and misreports, which by rolling from hand to hand along the streets, has gathered a prodigious bulk, is presently by the beams and influence of a warm and active merit melted down under foot into a dirty defamation and despicable calumny.

But this is our mode; unsight, unseen, to prejudge one another, and decry desert under nick names: He is an *Arminian*, a *Calvinist*, a *Nazarene*, a *Good-fellow*, any thing; and then without any more a doe sentence and condemn them: Acting over *Nero's* inhumane persecutions, we dress men in bear-skins, and then set our dogs at them.

Thus the *Rulers* and *Pharisees* had taken in unreasonable prejudices, and cherished unreconcilable animosities against *Jesus of Nazareth*, even to their own eternal prejudice; their censure hindring their beleif. And who knows, but this misprision might have cost *Nathanael* the honest *Israelite* here his salvation, had not he upon *Philip's* renew'd desire and importunate invitation come and seen, where he finds to his conviction and ready acknowledgment, that, notwithstanding the vulgar scandal, good might come out of *Nazareth*.

And this brings us to the second and indeed the main part of our discourse, taking the words, as an Inforcement of *Philip's* Invitation to a thorough knowledge of and acquaintance with the *Messias*. We have found him, whom *Moses* and the *Prophets* wrote of, *Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph, COME AND SEE.*

But



## II.

But because some, like *Idols*, have Eyes and see not, *Mar. 8. 18.* or shut their eyes against the light, and will not see, as being wilfully blind, that seeing see not, *Math. 13. 12.* or else are judicially blinded, that seeing they do see indeed, but do not perceive, to whom God has given the Spirit of slumber; or do hate the light, and dare not, cannot indure to see; who, because their works are evil, love darkness: that we may say, what our Saviour saies of the other sense of knowledge, so of this; *He that hath eyes to see, let him see.* Therefore, that we may see *Christ* aright, as we ought to do, and be convinc'd, that he is the true *Messias*, the Saviour of the world, let us first prepare our *Sight*. And to that four things are requisite.

Matt. 13. 14.  
Rom. 11. 8.  
Joh. 3. 20.

Matt. 11. 15.

1. That the *Faculty* be in order and good temper.
2. That the *Organ* be cleer and sound.
3. That the *Medium* be well dispos'd and rightly qualified.
4. That due *Distance* be observed.

1. For the *Faculty*; if that be distemper'd with *frensey, drink*, or the like, it takes in wrong representations, inverts and disorders the *species*, and renders the Images of things strangely confus'd into monsters and wild *Chimeras*. The *Iderical* see every thing as through a yellow glass; the *Melancholy* see *mormo's* and bugbears of their own making, and are frighted with the dark shades of their own black humours.

2 Pet. 1. 8, 9.

St *Peter* having spoken of *faith, vertue, patience, temperance, charity*, tells us, that if these things be in us, they will make us, that we shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord *Jesus Christ*; but he that lacks these things (says he) is blind and cannot see far off. The *Pharisees* saw *Christ*, but their envy and malice distorted every thing they saw in him; they came without *Charity*. *Herod* desired to see him, and did see him; but it was out of a vain wanton curiosity, without *faith*. *Pilate* saw him, but wanted *vertue* and courage; for out of base cowardise and a servile compliance with the humour of the rabble and his own paltry interest, he delivered him up to be scourged, whom he had pronounced Innocent. To see him aright then, we must bring a pure Intention and a mind freed from Prejudice.

2. For the *Organ*; we must get a seeing eye. If any of the humours or coats of the eye be depraved by habitual indulged sins, or wounded by willful transgressions; if a *catarrhac* or *luciddrop* of some foul scandal or regnant lust have seized it; if it be *bloudshot* with *Passion* or *bleer'd* with worldly Interest; 'tis impossible we should see *Christ* to any purpose.

Rom. 3. 18.  
Joh. 9. 6.

We must in this case, as St *John* elsewhere advises us, *anooint our eyes with Eyesalve that we may see.* We must apply *spittle* and *clay*, fasting and humiliation, and wash in *Siloa*, in a bath of penitential tears. These make the best *Eye-water*, to purge and clear the sight; for they that are of a clean heart shall see God.

Matt. 5. 8.

3. For the *Medium*. A fog is no good conveyance of the *Species*: Painted glass shews every thing of its own colour: A clear transparent Air is requisite. We must look upon *Christ* in the *Scripture-glass*: Do not judge of him according to the gross apprehensions and wild mistaking relations of seducers, saying, *Here is Christ, and there is Christ.* Go not out in this case to see. To apply our Saviour's caveat, *Mat. 24. 26.* If the *Quakers* shall say unto you, *Behold, he is in the desert*, in the wide open feilds; *Go not forth*: if the *Non-conformists* shall say, *Behold he is in the secret Chambers*; believe it not.

Natural reason is but a false light for this spiritual View; nor is vain Philosophy

*Philosophy* allowable in these sacred enquiries. *Enthusiasm* is an errant cheat, a *New light*, a Will in the wisp. Both *Jewish Kabbala* and *Romish Tradition* are uncertain insufficient Guides, full of erroneous mistakes, and patched up of various shreds of foppery and Popery. Now a right *Medium* should be uniform. A late confident *Author* of the *Romish* persuasion, pretending to give his Church *Sure footing*, has set her in a dark and slippery way, by sending her to school to *Tradition*. But we, that I may use St *Peter's* words, (who if we take his own word for it, is no *Traditionist*) we, I say, have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well, that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.

2 Pet. 1. 19.

4. For the *Distance*. Convenient standings are to be taken; neither too far off, nor yet too near, but according to occasion, at several positions and angles of light. A close *small print* requires a closer application of the eye. Some things like *Programs in Text*, we may read running. Some *mysteries* dazzle and confound the sight, if too familiarly approached. These must have a *veil* of admiration drawn over them, to help our weak sighted meditations, the better to comport with them. *Scrutator glorie opprimetur ab ea*. He that is over-busy in out-staring the Sun, may lose his eyes by the bargain, and be struck blind, as *Saul* was in his persecuting, or *Elimas* in his opposing *Christ*.

Act. 9. 9.  
Act. 13. 11.

Being thus prepared, we may come and see *Christ*, as he is the only begotten *Son of God*, the *Redeemer* of mankind: see him as Θεοῦ υἱὸν ὁμοῦν, *God and man*, in all the considerable *Instances* and *Circumstances*.

1. Of his *Birth* and outward Condition.
2. Of his *Life* and blameless Conversation.
3. Of his *Sufferings*, Death and Passion.
4. Of his *Doctrine* and heavenly Discourses.
5. Of his *Miracles*, the unquestionable Proofs of his Divinity.

And in all these respects, he lay under such popular mistakes and prejudices, that the κήρυγμα, the subject of preaching was *Scandal* to the *Jews*, and *folly* to the *Greeks*; and yet to those, who could with an eye of faith look through the veil of his flesh into the holy of holies, these mysteries were all glorious within, and the goatskin-curtains of this earthly *Tabernacle* lined with purple and blue and fine linnen; and the mean outside of his *Humanity* imbellish'd and dignified with the bright refulgent Emanations of an indwelling *Deity*. We shall, as we go along, wipe off the aspersions, as we meet with them, that this *Miroir* may appear in its fair lustre.

1 Cor. 1. 23.

*First* then consider we him, in the Meanness of his *Birth* and outward condition. See with what Illustrious obscurity he comes into the world; how mean and at once how glorious a Presence he maketh! The *Virgin-Mother* a poor Maid, but of *Royal* extraction; saluted and joy'd by an *Angel*, and overshadow'd by the power of the most high. *Joseph* an ordinary, but a righteous Person, and extraordinarily qualified for so honourable a Trust, to be the blessed *Virgin's* Guardian, and Foster-Father to the *Son of God*. *Bethlehem*, though the Inn was throng'd, found room in the stable, for fulfilling of prophecies. The Princely Babe laid in a manger, but royally attended with the host of Heaven, and own'd by an Embellish of *Eastern Princes*, with Homage and Presents as one Born a King. A new taper lighted in heaven, to solemnize the time of his birth. The tyrant *Herod* frighted into a cold sweat with the apprehension, and all *Jerusalem* put into a disorder about him. *Elizabeth*, *Zachary*, *Ann*, *Simeon*, prophecy strange things of him, In the wants and necessities of his life,

Luk. 1. 35.

Luk. 2. 7.  
Luk. 2. 13.

Matt. 2. 11.

Matt. 2. 3.

Luk. 8. 3.  
Mat. 4. 11.

having nothing of his own, he was ministr'd unto by vertuous Women and holy Angels.

Mat. 13. 55.  
Mar. 6. 3.

From *twelve* to 30 (all which time of his life Scripture hath involv'd in silence) he was imployed (as may be suppos'd) in his suppos'd Father's calling; for so where St *Mathew* says, *Is not this the Carpenter's son?* St *Mark* has it, *Is not this the Carpenter?* and the Jewish Talmud affords him no better title, then *Jesus Faber*; which, though scandalous to the Jews fond expectation, is no disparagement at all to Christian profession, whose principles are founded upon self-denial; our blessed Lord the teacher of it making himself of *no reputation*, that he might bring about the great design of his love, the work of our redemption.

Phil. 2. 7.

Mat. 11. 30.  
Luk. 9. 62.

That he made *jokes* and *ploughs* is not so certain; though *Justin Martyr* says it: much less can I believe it upon *Baronius* his ground, from *Christ's* saying *My yoke is easy*, and *He that sets his hand to the plough*; which are proverbial speeches, and usual Metaphors even in the Old Testament style. But that he follow'd his fathers trade, may be gather'd partly from that of St *Luke*, when he returned home from *Jerusalem*, after the dispute with the Doctors; ἡν ὑποτασσόμενος, which is more then ὑπετασσέτω, he was subject, we render it, but short of the Greek; 'Tis he was in subjection; the phrase denoting a state and continuance of subjection, an apprenticeship of obedience; but especially from the surprize of his neighbours at *Nazareth* upon his publick appearance. *Is not this the Carpenter?* How came he by this wisdom? which would have been no such wonder, had he, as some would make us beleive, gone aside for eighteen years together, and withdrawn himself into solitude for study and preparation for his publick Ministry.

Luk. 2. 51.

Mar. 6. 2, 3.

Joh. 1. 3.

Thus in his Profession a Mechanick, a Carpenter; but such an one, as was *Conditor mundi*, that built the whole frame of the world; for *all things were made by him*, and without him was not any thing made that was made; and *Redemptor operum* too, that took it a great honor to repair the breaches and decayes of collaps'd nature and performing his Task-work with his sweat and his blood. For his Country a *Galilean*; so the damosel calls him, *Math. 26. 69.* For his Abode and Education, a *Nazarene*; for so St *Luke* tells us, he had been bred there.

Mar. 14. 70

Act. 1. 11.

Now *Galilee* it self of no Esteem amongst those of *Judea*; (as we have shewed before) if for nothing else, for the rusticity and clownishness of the *Dialect*, ἡ γαλιλαῖα, thy rude pronunciation betraist thee, saith he to *Peter*, which thing added to the miracle of *Tongues* too: *Are not all these, which speak*, say they, *Galileans?* Act. 2. 7. yet an Appellation, the Angels honour in their Address to the Apostles after our Lord's Ascension, calling them, Ἄνδρες Γαλιλαῖοι, Ye men of *Galilee*.

Luk. 4. 29.

Isa. 11. 1.

Act. 22. 8.

Luk. 1. 32.  
Act. 2. 30.  
Joh. 18. 36.

Then *Nazareth*, a city of no credit, even amongst the very *Galileans*; as appears here by *Nathanael*; as *Jesus* himself was of no repute amongst the very *Nazarens*; who at one time were so offended with him, that they would have thrown him headlong off the brow of the Hill, whereon *Nazareth* was built; yet upon that Hill grew this Branch of the Lord, foretold by *Esay*; and the place so ennobled by his Education and Converse, that this *Inscription* which his Enemies meant for Reproach, was made the Imperial Title of his Cross, and himself owns it in his glory; *I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.*

In fine, though the Jews were disappointed in their expectation of an earthly Prince, who should with secular power set them free from the Roman yoke; He was a King in a far better sense, and sat upon the throne of his father *David*, but his Kingdom was not of this world; it was spiritual



spiritual, to ransom us from the Captivity of our sins, the worst Enemies we have in the world, and to instate us Heirs and Coheirs with himself of an heavenly Kingdom.

*Secondly*; let us examine the Innocence of his *life*, though that much blemished and blackned by his Adversaries.

As to his Piety to *God*, no blasphemers, since it was no robbery for him to be equal with *God*; no traducer of *Moses*, as counted *worthy of more glory* than he. *Moses* was faithful, as a *servant*, but *Christ*, as a *Son*. No changer of Customs, but a fulfiller of the *Law*, both in its *precepts* and *ceremonies*; and yet a bringer on of *grace* and *truth*. Not a destroyer, but according to *Haggai's* prediction, an honourer of the *Temple* with his presence, and yet a builder of his own house the *Church*. Frequent in *prayers* and spiritual exercises, and holy *austerities*, fasting and watching, denying himself refection and repose, and *obedient to death, even the death of the Cross*. Phil. 2. 6. Heb. 3. 3, 5, 6. Joh. 1. 17. Hag. 2. 7. Phil. 2. 8.

As to his carriage to *Men*, righteous and merciful, humble and meek, doing all manner of good to all manner of persons. No pretender to Rule, but a payer of tribute, and an assertor of *Cæsar's* authority and rights. No raiser of Sedition, or Setter up of Fifth-monarchy, but one that readily quitted the sorry advantage of being made *King* by the people. No Schismatick or disturber of the Nation, sending the *Leper* to shew himself to the *Priest*, and bidding the people hear those that sate in *Moses* chair; and, if *Suidas* his Author have told him right, was himself listed in *Albo Sacerdotum* in the *Priests* roll, and officiated his course in the Temple. Mar. 12. 17. Joh. 6. 15. Matt. 8. 4. Matt. 23. 2, 3.

As to his *morality* and sobriety, no *glutton* or *winebibber*, though he made meetings and feasts his opportunities of doing good and shewing his miracles. A friend indeed to *publicans* and *sinners*, but as a *Physician* is to the sick, to cure them; and a keeper of ill company, out of design to do them good, to make them good. Matt. 11. 19. Matt. 9. 12.

In the *third place*, take a view of Him in his bitter *sufferings*; as he was Most cruelly us'd and (which is the greatest cruelty to an Ingenuous mind) shamefully scorn'd of men, for whom he had the greatest kindness; smitten and (which is more cutting to any child of *God*) forsaken of his Father. But all this according to the divine *Oeconomy*, in order to our salvation, for the sins of men, which he had taken upon him. A Crucified *Saviour*, who that he might save others, would not save himself; yet a dying *God*, in his lowest state attested by Earthquakes and other miraculous events; that, at that very juncture of time, he was own'd by a *Malefactor*, that suffer'd with him, to be *God*; and confest by the *Centurion*, that guarded him, to be of a truth the *Son of God*. Psal. 22. 6. Matt. 26. 31. Matt. 27. 46. Luk. 23. 42. Luk. 23. 47. Mar. 15. 39.

And yet the prejudice of his *death* was so great and so sad, that even his own Followers hung down the head with despondence, and flagg'd in their hopes after his Crucifixion; having trusted, that it had been he, which should have redeemed *Israel*, Luke, 24. 21. But he easily solv'd that doubt out of *Moses* and the *Prophets*, concluding from them; Ought not *Christ* to have suffer'd these things, and so to enter into his glory? ver. 26.

*Fourthly*, let us see, what we hear, in the purity of his *Doctrine*.

As to the *manner* of it; no seducer or setter up of Conventicles and private meetings; he taught dayly in their *Synagogues*, and in the *Temple* openly

Matt. 7. 29.  
Joh. 7. 46.

openly with peril of his life; no *Pharisaical* Glosser, no precarious Interpreter, but he did ἐξουσιάζειν *dominari in concionibus*, he taught with authority, and spake so as never man spake. All his discourse was *Text*.

Joh. 8. 50.

As to the *matter* of it; the highest Improvements of *morality*, and spiritual *mysteries* above the reach and ken of Natural understanding; that plainly shewed it to be of divine stamp.

As to the *end*; it was not to advance his own glory; but to perfect human nature, to declare unto us the whole will of God concerning our salvation, and to guide us in the saving ways of life everlasting.

Mar. 6. 6.

*Fifthly* and lastly, let us look upon his *Miracles* and other Remarks of his *divinity*, which were but confirmations of that heavenly *doctrine*. And he that is not mov'd and convinc'd with *miracles*, is himself *one* of the greatest; insomuch that in this case our *Saviour* himself marvelled at the unbelief of his countrymen of *Nazareth*.

Behold him working his wonderful *Cures*; with what Ease and Certainty, and with how unlikely means he does them; giving sight to the *blind*, teaching the *dumb* to speak, opening the *deaf* ear, causing the *lame* to walk, healing *leprosy*, *palsies*, *fevers*, *bloody flux*, all manner of *diseases*, with a word, with a touch; raising the *dead*, casting out *devils*, calming *storms*, commanding the *winds* and the *waves*, feeding thousands with a few *loaves*. To these add the Apparitions of *Angels*, voices from Heaven, his miraculous *Fasting*, his glorious *Resurrection* and *Ascension*.

Matt. 9. 34.

Mar. 3. 21.

Matt. 28. 13.

And in all these no *Sorcery*, no *Necromancy* or *Magical practice*, as *Appolonius* us'd; No *Collusion* with the Devil, as the slanderous *Pharisees* gave out, designing to slur what they could not deny. No freak of a distempered brain, or force of an overstrain'd Imagination, as his fond Kindred imagined, οτι ἐξέστη, that he was *beside himself*. No *Legerdemain*, no *Juggle* or private conveyance, as they falsely reported of his *Resurrection*, that he was stolen out of the grave. No flattery of his followers, as in *Vespasian's* case, to beguile us in the truth of the story. But all his works were performed fairly and openly, in the face of the Sun, before multitudes of people; clearly, without any art or shift, by the sole power of his Deity; and with this advantage to boot, which makes them right *miracles* indeed, emanations of an almighty goodness, that they were all Beneficial to mankind; none of them being order'd for *hurt*, or for *ostentation*, but for the real good of the *bodies* or *souls* of men.

Thus have I in a rude draught endeavour'd to present to your sight the full *pourtrait* in little of *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, in all his features and lineaments; which exactly agree to that Copy, which *Moses* in the Law and the *Prophets* have taken of him. I have heard of an *Artist*, who by the Reflection, which a heap of *rags*, laid in a seeming disorder, in the corner of a room, made upon a brazen Pillar, contrived an excellent picture of one of the *French Kings*; So these mean *Circumstances* and prejudices of the *Humane* nature, reflected upon the *miroir* of the *Divine*, give a full and fair Representation of the Son of God; and the Condescensions of his love, in his *voluntary* Abasements, serve to set forth his *essential* Glories.

Come and see then; but think not, that seeing is all. Some see him and deny him, and in such their seeing does but aggravate their guilt; as *Christ* tells the *Pharisees*, Joh. 9. 41. *If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth*. Nor is this seeing here empty speculation, but tends further to *faith* and *practice*. To see is a word of large importance in scripture dialect.

1. It signifieth to *consider*, and *meditate*, and *judge*, and *resolve*. 'Tis not an overt transient *look* will serve turn; a *glance* upon the beauties of Christ and away, and then forget what manner of person he is; but our thoughts must dwell upon him, we must mind him, and study him to a thorough Conviction and full Perswasion. *Seeing is beleving* here; when we can wait on Christ with a *rational service*, being highly convinc'd of the reasonableness of *Christian Religion*, that 'tis mainly agreeable to the constitution of mans *nature*, and perfectly consonant to the principles of right reason.

Rom. 12. 4

2. To *admire* and *affect*; when *looking begets liking*; when viewing his superlative Excellencies we ingage our *affections*. 'Tis not a *notion* swimming in the *brain*, but the *power* of it must sink down to the *heart*; when the *convictions* of the *Understanding* are followed, and backed with the *assents* and imbraces of the *Will*, that the man is now in *Christ*, and *Christ* in him, with a kind of *περὶ ἑαυτοῦ* and reciprocal Oneness; when he hath got *Idem velle & idem nolle*, wills and nills the same, and by so strict a tie is united to *Christ*, that he is taken with him, and taken up with him, and taken up into him, and glories in nothing but in him, and in him too Crucified.

Gal. 6. 14.

3. To *obtain*, to *injoy*, and have full possession. So the *Apostle* Rom. 11. 7. sets the opposition between *obtaining* and *blindness*; Saith he, *Israel hath not obtain'd that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtain'd it, and the rest were blinded*. Thus to *see the Kingdom of God* is to have it, to inherit it. *Tasting* is joyn'd with this seeing. *O taste and see, how good the Lord is*. *Come and see* here then, is as much as if he had said, *Come and try*, come and be satisfied. 'Tis an experimental practical knowledge, a *Vision* attended with *Fruition*; *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*; that is, they shall injoy him: for else where were the blessedness? Bare sight, without Injoyment, is but a Torment, which the *Poets* devised for their Hell; at best a *Tantalizing* delusion. This *sight* will even in this life raise us above the region of *hope* and *faith*, which are of things not seen, by giving us present possession of all the graces and benefits of *Christ*. When the soul is so espoused and closely knit in love to him, made as it were flesh of his flesh, and drawing continual supplies of life and spirit from him, as her Head; that now the man is become a *new creature*, and as it was before, *sin* acted, and not he, so now tis not he acts, but *grace*,

Psal. 34. 8.

Matt. 5. 8.

Rom. 7. 20.

And if we come with a resolution thus to *see Christ*, he will, as he does here *Nathanael*, with his preventing grace see us first, and will meet us, as we are coming to him in the kindness of our Inclinations and the forwardness of our Desires; from whose blessed Acquaintance we shall receive such ample and abundant satisfactions, and shall be so filled with ravishments of Joy and extatical Admirations, that our hearts will run over at our mouths, and we shall with *Philip* here be fain to call in others to partake with us of those unconceivable Felicities, which are to be found in *Christ*, infinitely beyond the beleaf and apprehension of all but those, who with due preparation of mind *come and see* him.

And this is our *last* Consideration; for *Philip*, but two verses before, had been called himself with a *Follow me*; and the very first Exercise of his *Apostleship*, the earliest Proof of his *Christianity*, and the immediate Issue of *grace* in him, is the calling of another with a *Come and see*. Being himself effectually touch'd by the *magnetick* and attractive vertue of the *Spirit*, he presently draws in others. He has no sooner lighted his own *candle*, but he goes to light *Nathanaels* too.

So



So active a Principle there is in *grace*, that wherever it is, it will be instantly exerting it self and shewing its vigour. *Spiritual life*, like the *natural*, is demonstrated and accompanied with *motion*. If there be life at *root*, the tree, which is planted by the water-side, sprouts out, and puts forth *buds* and *blossoms* of holy resolutions and pious discourses, and brings forth the *fruit* of good works in due season. A little plant of a *Vine* will in a small time climb up, and spread it self upon the walls, and cover the whole side of the house with the verdure of its flourishing embraces.

Psal. i. 3.

Luk. 24. 32.

*Philip's* heart, no doubt, did (as the disciples of *Emmans*) burn and glow within him, when *Jesus* spoke to him; and here the fire within breaks out. It is the nature of *fire*, to assimilate every thing, it meets with, and turn it into it self; and so 'tis of *zeal* too. One live-coal sets all the heap on fire. He is dead and cold in his religion, that does not warm others, he converses with, into a *devotion*. He may have the outward *form* of godliness, but wants the inward *power*.

*Grace* as well as *Nature*, is prolifick, and for propagation of it self: The *Spartans*, though great honourers of old age, allow'd no respect to be shewn to a stale barren Celibate, with this censure,

*Nascitur indignè per quem non nascitur alter.*

Heb. 2. 13.

Matt. 25. 16,  
17.

Every right *Christian* will bring in that account, as *Christ* does; Behold, *I and the children, which God hath given me*. We may not be all *preachers*, but we must all edifie one another, and the *two talents* must gain other two, and the *five* other five.

Act. 10. 38.

2 Tim. 4. 2.

Act. 8. 29.

Matt. 20. 6.

2 Kin. 4. 3.

Mat. 13. 33.

Mat. 16. 6.

Mat. 13. 47.

Joh. 1. 44.  
בית ציפורין  
domus piscatori-  
onis.

*Philip* had found *Jesus*, and now finds *Nathanael*, to bring him along with him: whether by *accident*, for so the word from the *Hebrew* propriety will signify, *he met with him by chance*. *Grace* lays hold on and improves all Opportunities; is never idle, but like the giver of it, goes about doing good: and accordingly the *Apostle* takes *preaching* to be a work never out of season, where he would have it done *in season, out of season*. Thus the other *Philip*, sent by the same Spirit we meet with at the *Eunuch's* coach-side; or whether he went *purposely* to seek him, and found him out. We must seek opportunities of doing good, and not stand still, like those Loiterers in the *market-place* all the day idle till somebody come and hire us. *Grace* is spreading upon all occasions and communicative; and the more 'tis so, the better 'tis, and we may be the surer, that it is the right *Grace*, when, like the *widow's oile*, it runs over, and fills the neighbours Vessels.

*Scripture* compares it to things of that nature; *the Kingdom of heaven*, that is, *the Church* of God, or the *grace* of God, which you will, is in one parable likened to a peice of *leaven*, which, being laid in some measures of fine flower, presently ferments the whole lump, diffusing its vertue every way. The *leaven of the Pharisees*, which *Christ* bids us beware of, is quite another kind of thing; a muly fower principle of *pride* and *envy* and *malice*, which lay fermenting at the heart of them, puffing them up and making them surly and censorious and unfavoury in their Conversation: whereas genuine *grace* is amiable and friendly, has all the *Homiletick* vertues in it, opens and spreads it self freely, with all obligingness and inearments.

Again in another place, it is compared to a *draw-net*. Most of the *Apostles* (you know) were *Fishermen*; at least those of the first Call, and our *Philip* in all likelyhood one, being of *Bethsaida*, (the city of *Andewr* and *Peter*, a fisher-town, (as the very name imports) scituate near the

Sea

Sea of Galilee. And this was an *Allegory*, to shew they were to be fishers and catchers of men. St Peter's net at one draught took up about three thousand souls; so it is exprest, *Act. 2. 41.* and in the beginning of the *verse* it is said they gladly took the bait. *Then they, that gladly received his word, were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

Mat. 4. 19.

Our Saviour tells his Disciples, that they are *the salt of the Earth*; which as 'tis a preservative against corruption, so it is strangely penetrative, and does at distances impart its acrimonious relish; and that they are *the light of the world*. Christian knowledge is diffusive like *light*, and with instantaneous motions darts it self round, illustrating every thing it lights on, with its bright appearance. In this case

Mat. 5. 13.

14.

*Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.*

Christian religion is very mysterious, but not at all reserv'd. Come, says the woman of Samaria to her neighbours, after she had seen and talk'd with Christ; Come (says she) and see the man. So Andrew in this very Chapter having been invited by Christ to his dwelling with a Come and see, and bin there entertain'd by him, comes to Simon and tells him, *We have found the Messias.*

Joh. 4. 19.

39.

42.

Thus were the primitive saints transported with the news, the glad tidings of the Gospel, and could not hold; but like the great Mathematician, after he had by study and tryal found out the hard problem, they ran through the streets, in a spiritual extasy, crying, *εὐρηκα, εὐρηκα, = uon xca xca.* We have found him, We have found him; insomuch that people judg'd them out of their wits, and drunk with new wine. And indeed how could they choose, but be beside themselves, having got into Christ? And it was such new wine they were full of, as forced the hoops, and made them break out into such holy extravagancies and heavenly transports, that they could not conceal and keep in their joys.

Act. 2. 13.

Nay, when Themselves were silent, their very faces could not keep counsel; but discovered, and even preach'd to the amazed Beholders their inward Possessions and glorious Resentments. St Stephen's Judges looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an Angel; an Angelical, an Evangelical face. Moses after his converse with God upon the Mount, had his visage so irradiated, that, without the Law, the very Authority of his Face had commanded the Reverence of the people, and they could not look upon him, such beams, or as the Hebrew phrase gives it, *horns of glory* streamed from his celestial Countenance.

Act. 6. 15.

Exod. 34. 30

Yet this discourse of holy raptures and extraordinary emotions of the ancient Saints, will be far enough from justifying the foolish outrageous zeal and odd practices of our fanatick brethren, who may clamber italls, and preach Christ in our streets; and yet, for all that, poor souls, may at last receive that answer, which our Saviour tells us, he shall give some, which do as they do; *Away from me, I know you not.* The Scribes and Pharisees compassed sea and land, and possibly took as much pains to gain Profelites for Hell, as the Apostles did to bring in Disciples to the Church: As Christ went about doing good, so the Devil goes about too, doing mischief, and seeking whom he may devour. A Garden of Flowers fills the neighbouring Air with its spicy fragrant Odours and aromattick perfumes; and no less does the nasty Dunghil reake and exhale its noisom Vapours. Antidotes have not so diffusive a benignity, but that Pests and Plagues propagate them selves by as spreading and malicious a Contagion

Mat. 7. 23.

Mat. 23. 15.

1 Pet. 5. 8.

Truth is, Grace and Sin make use of the same arts and methods of Industry,

Cant. 6. 10.

Industry, and seem to have the same kind of *operation*: but it is no hard matter to distinguish; since 'tis apparent, they act from contrary *principles* and to contrary *ends*. *Vice* has its commission sign'd in *Hell*, and thither leads its deluded followers; whilest *Grace* comes impower'd by the *Captain* of our Salvation from *Heaven*, and marshalling the *Church militant*, like an Army with the Banners of Christ's love displaid over her, brings her *triumphant* to Thrones, and incircles her victorious Brows with never-fading Wreaths of *glory*: to which *Glory*, God of his mercy by his *grace* bring us. *Amen*.

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A S E R

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# A Sermon upon St. *STEPHEN*'s Day.

Preached at St. Peter's Westminster, Dec. 26. 1675.

## Acts VII. 60.

*And he (Stephen) kneeled down, and cryed with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*



When we consider, as we ought to do at this Festival of *Christ's Birth*, the infinite condescensions of divine love, that God sent his Son cloathed in our Nature to *do* and to *dye* for us, when the World was at enmity with him; there cannot be a more suitable subject for our *Meditation* and *Practise*, then, that as God loved us, so we should love one another, even those who have deserved worst at our hands.

And next to our blessed *Lord* himself, there cannot be a more eminent Example of this, then the *Protomartyr*, who led the Van in the noble Army of *Martyrs*, who prayed for his enemies.

For all his other Virtues and Characters, the bravery of his *Faith*, the constancy of his *Mind*, the greatness of his *Parts*, the undauntedness and glories of his *Countenance*, the learning and conviction of his *Discourse*, the power and triumphs of his *Elocution*, (which are *Themes*, may serve to make just subjects of Meditation upon, severally by themselves) these are inconsiderable things in comparison of this *Charity* of his; as *St Paul* has determin'd it, that if a man *speak with the tongue of Angels, and give his body to be burnt, or stoned, as he did, and have not Charity*, it all signifies nothing. 1 Cor. 13. 2. 3.

Here we find him in his lowest posture, upon his knees, at the place of Execution, with the stones flying thick about him, amidst his furious Adversaries, expressing the same *Devotion* in his *Prayers*, as he had before *learning* and *reason* in his *Discourses*; shewing no less *humility* and *patience* in his sufferings at the *Block*, then he had *courage* and *resolution* in his Defence at the *Bar*: and alike practising *Piety* to his *Jesus*, whom he saw standing at the right hand of God ready to assist and to receive him, and *Charity* to his and his *Jesus's* enemies, who were now in defiance of the *Master* stoning and pelting the *Servant* to death.

*And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit; so the verse before the Text.*

*And he kneeled down, and cryed with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And having said this, he fell asleep:* so the Text it self.

Wherein let me recommend to your Imitation a Christian virtue here implied, the *Love of our Enemies*; Implied, did I say? I might have said Expressed; for he express'd his love of them, in his praying for them; and

in order to this I shall exemplifie this Love of enemies in St Stephen's carriage and deportment, as it is here set down: that he *kneeled, and cryed with a loud voice, and pray'd for them.*

Now because *Instruction* is more effectual by *Example*, then by *Precepts*, the one presenting lively to the *sight*, what the other informs the understanding by the duller sense of *Hearing*; and seeing that Virtues are with more ease and delight, and so with more persuasiveness learnt, when we see them *acted*, then when we onely hear them *discourt*: give me leave first to go over the draught and particulars of the *Example*, and then by way of Application lay before you some Inducements for your *Imitation* of him in the practice of this Virtue.

The *Example* is St Stephen praying for his Enemies: where we have to consider,

- I. The Posture in which he prays; *He kneeled down.*
- II. The Manner of his Delivery; *He cryed with a loud voice.*
- III. The Prayer it self which he used; *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*
- IV. The Time of his making this Prayer; they were the very last words he spoke; he dyed with this Prayer in his mouth; *And when he had said this, he fell asleep.*

I. *He kneeled down.* We shall take notice, that this posture of *kneeling* is in the general an instance of religious *Reverence* in our humble addresses to God; and in particular, as here in St Stephen's case, of devout *Earnestness* in the making our importunate Requests to him.

1. First *Kneeling* is a posture of *Reverence*, and therefore hath by pious Persons of all Ages been lookt upon, as fit to be used in our approaches to the heavenly Majesty.

Psal. 95. 6.

Thus David in his Invitatory: *O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker*; as though without these acts of Adoration, *falling down and kneeling*, there could be no worship of God. *Let us worship.* How is that to be done? why? by *falling down, and kneeling before him*; by bowing the *body*, to shew the Veneration and Humility of our *minds*; and by the bending of the *knees*, to make out the inclinations and compliances of our *wills*.

It is therefore no less *irrational* then *impious*, for any one to do, (as too many have in these late licentious times been taught to do) to come into places of *Worship* without any regard of their *Postures*, and to think their bare bodily Appearance enough, how rude soever their Behaviour may be.

For God, who made *body* as well as *soul*, expects and requires to be honoured and served with both; and the second *Commandment*, which forbids us to apply the Worship of our bodies to *Idols*, must be so understood, as that it is not onely lawful, but fit and necessary to give that Worship to God, to which we alike stand oblig'd by that *Commandment* for the outward man, as in the *first* for the inward; they both running in the same *negative* strain, and each of them including an *affirmative*.

*O come then, and let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.* This is the reason of our *kneeling*, it is the *Lord our Maker*; the Maker of the whole *Compositum*, body and soul both; for he made us, and not we our selves.

Psal. 100. 2.  
Dan. 6. 10.  
Acts 9. 40. &  
20. 36.  
Luke 22. 41.

Thus did Daniel in the Old Testament, Peter and Paul in the New, and Christ himself in his Humanity; they *kneeled* at their Devotions. And what

what shall we say? Was it ever otherwise, when any thing like Piety was practised in the World?

And now, if we wonder at *some*, who have laid aside the common *Civilities* wont to be paid to *men*, have we not much more reason to wonder at others, who, contrary to all *Antiquity, Religion, Reason* and *Sense*, have taught People to throw off all outward decent *Regards* to *God* himself? that when they come into places of publick Assemblies, they present themselves like *Behemoth*, (that is, Elephants) as if their Maker had (according to an old Vulgar error concerning that Creature) given them no joints in their *knees* to perform their Homage to him with.

This as to *Reverence*; though that may even in *Prayer* too, I confess, be exprest by other *postures* likewise upon occasions.

For so the *Publican* stood *afar off*, and pray'd; and yet so he stood, as that he bow'd his *head* instead of his *knee*, inasmuch that he durst not look up: and possibly he might take it for too great a Presumption for him, to make so *familiar*, though *humble* (as being the *ordinary*) Address; and since *Children* use to *kneel* to their *Parents*, he chose to *stand* at distance like a *Servant* before his *Master*.

Luk. 18. 13†

Nay, even here *Stephen* himself in the very foregoing Verse, *stood* and pray'd, *Lord Jesu receive my spirit*; For here it is first, that we find him *kneeling*, as if he had not been at Prayers before.

And indeed is not *that* as much a *Confession* of his Faith in *Christ*, for which he was now to suffer; as a *Prayer*, since it is directed to *Jesus* as *Lord* and *God*? and to *Confession*, *standing* is as suitable, as *kneeling* is to *Prayer*; or was it that he *stood* in compliance with his *Lords* own posture, whom he saw *standing* at *Gods* right hand?

But if so, why then does not he continue *standing*? why does he change his posture, and now fall on his knees?

2. His *Charity* will give the best reason of that. He *stood* when he prayed for himself; but now he is to pray for others, to supplicate for his Enemies Forgiveness, to shew the ardent Zeal and earnest Desire he has for their Souls good, *he kneels down*; as resolving not to leave his knees, till he obtain their Pardon, and to make it his last request, and that which he will dye with, that this sin of theirs in putting him to death, may not be reckon'd to them so, as either to hinder their *Conversion* here, or *Salvation* hereafter.

Their *sin* humbled him more then his own *suffering*: nor did the *stones* so much wound his Head, or bruise his Body, as the *guilt* of those who flung, then pierced his Heart, and afflicted his Soul: so that as if he had had a greater care of *them*, then he had of *himself*, having, as he stood, dispatched his own Concerns, he falls low on his knees, in a posture of more importunate Devotion, to negotiate the Interests of his Enemies.

Nor did this his Earnestness want its success. *One*, we are sure of, there was, to whose charge this sin might have been laid, for he was *consenting to his death*; as being of the *Zealots* Faction, who were the Managers of this Execution; and yet, as 'tis thought by one of the *Fathers*, was, for this very Prayer of *St Stephens*, recovered, and by a miracle of Mercy converted. *Si Stephanus non orasset, Paulum non habuisset Ecclesia*; says he, *Had not Stephen pray'd, the Church might still* (for ought we know) *have been without a Paul*.

Acts 8. 1†

And it is not unlikely, but many *others* there might be, so that what one ingeniously remarks upon this passage, may have as much of *truth* in it, as



it has of pious *wit*; that God was able *out of those stones*, which were thrown at *Stephen*, (thanks to his Prayer, which procured them that Grace) *to raise up Children unto Abraham*.

Matt. 3. 9.

This is a way indeed of loving *Enemies*, to bring them into the *Church*, and thence to *Heaven*; and by this means to make them *Gods friends*, and our own for ever.

Acts 7. 58.

And now, *blest Saint*, though we may in part impute thy death to *Saul*, who kept the *Witnesses cloaths*, while they brain'd thee; yet to thy Prayer it was, we owe much the *Life and Labours of St Paul*; so that what was lost in thee to the *Church* by this untimely death, was recover'd and recompensed by his *Conversion*, to which thy fervent Prayer upon thy dying bended knees prov'd so happily instrumental.

But *kneeling* was not all; there is another *Circumstance* to make out the *Earnestness* of it.

Psal. 77. 1.

II. *He cryed with a loud voice*. It is a frequent expression, the *Royal Prophet* makes use of; *I cryed with my voice to God*, that is, I was earnest in my Prayers and Intreaties, and he heard me.

Not that he, who understands the language of the *Heart*, and knows our inmost Conceptions, needs a *vocal* delivery for his own Information; much less the advancing of the voice to make him hear: but where a pious Heart is possess'd with a sincere sense of its wants, there will be an affectionate fervent Utterance of its desires; and *this lifting up of the voice*, as on our side it shews our total *Dependance* upon divine Aids for our relief in our Distresses, and our earnest Application to divine Goodness; so on *Gods* side it moves him to *Compassion*, as the bowels of a tender-hearted Parent are toucht with an intimate and earning sense of her crying Child, to supply its *wants*, and to bemoan its *griefs*.

Gen. 32. 24.  
compar'd  
with Hof. 12. 4.

This is that is called *wrestling* with God in Prayer, and laying fast hold on the Almighty, so as not to let him go without leaving a blessing behind him.

Heb. 5. 7.

This the *Son of God* himself practis'd in his sufferings, importuning his heavenly Father *with strong cries*, till he was heard in what he feared.

Psal. 39. 3.

And if the *Psalmist* were heard, when he barely *cryed with his voice* to the Lord; what Assurance may we have, that our Requests shall be accepted, and our Prayer shall enter into his Presence, if we cry to him *with a loud voice*? when our pious Affections burst forth like a boiling Spring, and we pour out our Souls before him, when our Hearts are hot within us, and at length, through the ardency of Spirit, the *Sacred Fire* breaks out from the *Altars* of our bosoms, into flames and sparks that mount themselves Heavenwards; and we speak with our *Tongues* the Desires of our *Souls*, and lift up *Heart and Voice* both to the *Hills*, from whence our help cometh, even to the *Rock of our Salvation*.

It was not then out of any vain-glorious Ostentation, that *St Stephen* cryed *with a loud voice*; nor was it out of any Hope, he might possibly have, of convincing his *Enemies* with the charity of his *Prayers*, whom he could not prevail upon with the strength of his *Arguments*; but it was out of that passionate compassionate Concernment he had for their Souls.

I know there have been some, who have affected the *loudness of voice*, and have made Heaven and Earth ring with their *cries*; when either they have prayed for blood and violence; or that, which they would have to be thought Devotion, has been stuff'd only with tedious Impertinences, and nauseous Repetitions, and wanted these Artifices to put it off; and  
this

this has proceeded more from *Affectation* or *Design*, then *Affection*, as being either *vox & praterè nihil*, but an empty voice and nothing else; or else like the loud cry of St. Stephen's Persecutors.

For the Zealots here in the Context cried also with a loud voice; but that was in a desperate fury, when they stopped their ears withall, to shew their inexorable Cruelty, that they were resolv'd not to hear a word more, that this stout Champion, and now glorious Sufferer should speak in his own or his Masters behalf. Ver. 57.

We see here, that furious blind Zeal, and true Christian Charity may use the same methods, and take the same course to a quite contrary end, and much different Purpose.

The Persecutors cry with a loud voice; but their cry was outrage and uproar, the result of a most direful Malice.

The Martyr cries with a loud voice too; but his cry is Devotion and Supplication, the effect of a genuine and high-raisd Charity.

Their cry was a rude Alarm for the wicked onset, to animate and exasperate their rage.

His cry was a powerful Charm to invoke and implore their Pardon from Heaven.

He Ecchoes back their shouts with kinder accents, and returns their cries so, as if possible to drown them in a gracious Forgiveness.

Besides, he apprehended that the voice of his Blood would cry aloud to Heaven for Vengeance; and therefore presents it with the cry of his Prayers, which he sends aforehand to take Sanctuary for his guilty Murderers, before Sentence should be given against them, or the Avenger of blood should be sent out with hue and cry after them.

Blessed Martyr! Thus was thy gracious Master treated before thee; They cried, *Away with him, crucifie him, and let his blood be upon us, and upon our children*; and Thus did he carry himself towards his Adversaries; he cried, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*; and thus Thou, in imitation of him, answeredst the loud cries of the enraged Multitude, and preventedst the cries of thy innocent blood, which they were now actually spilling, with the louder cries of thy most earnest and importunate Prayers for their Forgiveness. Luke 23. 34

He cried with a loud voice, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*. That is the third thing.

III. The Prayer it self; which, as to the manner of it, is short and ejaculatory; as to the matter, breaths all of it the highest and most cordial Charity.

I. I know, the humour of some pretending Pious is not to fancy any Prayers, but what are long-winded; They think therefore the Church-Collects and Responsals to be but narrow and scanty expressions of Devotion, and censure them rather for interruptions then performances of Prayer; whereas on the contrary, by these short petitionary Returns, the Understandings of People are much advantaged, and their Affections highly quickned and inflam'd in the frequent Repetition of their assent; whilst that *tedium* and weariness, which usually accompanies duller length, is by this means fairly avoided.

This was our Saviours own Practice in his agony, and other Instances; where he, who was himself the Word, could not have wanted multitude of words, had he so thought fit, to express the overflowing Conceptions and Affections of his divine Soul; but was content to deliver himself in short and plain Forms of words, and to reiterate them too upon occasion.

This

Mat. 6. 7.

This was likewise his *Judgment*, when being to prescribe a *Form of Prayer* for the use of his Disciples, which was to be the very ground of *Liturgy*, he adviseth us not to be like the *Heathens*, who imagined they should be heard for their much babling.

Luk. 18. 13.

Thus pray'd the *Publican* in a *Church-form*, continued still almost *verbatim* in our Litany, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner*; and went home justified, rather than the *Pharisee*, who used a conceited (I mean, a conceived) form of his own, and as broad perhaps, as the *Phylacteries* he wore.

Thus our St *Stephen* to comprise *multa paucis*, much in a little, coucheth his *matter* close, and makes out in *Charity*, what may seem wanting in length.

2. Now what greater *Charity* is there, then that to the Souls of men? and how can that *Charity* be better and more nobly exprest, then by forgiving our *Enemies* our selves, and recommending them to Gods *Forgiveness*? He does, as it were, set God an example, pardoning them himself, and then desiring his *Pardon* for them likewise.

He anticipates divine *Justice*, and puts a stop to procedures against these Malefactors in *Heaven*, by shewing *Mercy* to them in his own person here upon *Earth*.

And whereas *Christ* hath taught us to pray in our own behalf, that God *would forgive us our offences, as we forgive them that offend us*; He in a seeming higher flight intreats pardon for his *Enemies* at Gods hands, implying they had it already at his.

*Lord lay not this sin to their charge*; as if he had said, *Lord, thou knowest, I love thee so intirely, and am so freely ready to suffer for thy sake, that I do not, will not, lay this sin of theirs in my intended Murder to their charge, now while they are doing it; O do not thou ever lay it to their charge, after it is done!*

*Murder* a heinous crying sin, and the *charge* of it proportionably dreadful. But what kind of *Murder* this? the murder of an innocent and excellent person, of a Minister of *Christ*, and that upon the account of his Constancy to Religion, and his Faith in the holy *Jesus*.

This *sin* of theirs had many aggravating *Circumstances*; as being committed not only against the Rules of *Piety* and known *Justice*, but against the very *Laws* of the *Country*, and in affront to the *Government* they then lived under.

It is true, the *Jews* had a custom, as *Josephus* tells us, (an irregular custom though) for the Rabble, without any further process, and that by the connivance of the *Sanhedrim*, to put to death some Malefactors by *stoning* them; particularly in the case of *Idolatry*, when any one was found bringing in false *Worships*.

And from this allowance arose the Sect or Faction of the *Zealots*; whose practice it was, without expecting sentence, to seize men guilty or not guilty, and hurry them to the place of Execution, as they did St *Stephen* here.

And the *Romans* themselves winkt at this disorder, as long as the mischief of it lit only on some few among the *Jews* themselves, members of the *Jewish* Nation.

But this humour of popular Rage grew at last to that arbitrary Exorbitance, that it prov'd one of the greatest fatal occasions of that Peoples final destruction, that one stone should not be left upon another.

This



This was our Saviours complaint and commination; *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent to thee, &c.* See the wild effects of an ill govern'd zeal, which, amidst the greatest pretences of Piety, so easily degenerates into outrageous *Passion*, and mixes it self with corrupt *Interest*.

Luke 13. 34.

And I know not how People are over-willingly imposed on with these false shews of Piety.

This was us'd to be done, not only with *impurity*, but with *glory* too; as if they did God the most meritorious service in the highest acts of *Impiety*, as if *superlative Villanies* were the surest test of a *Godly party*.

But St. Stephen, however their zeal may transport them, as he takes up *charity*, so he does not let go his *courage*; so some Greek Copies read his Character in the *sixth Chapter*, (where we read, *full of faith and power*) *πληρὸν χάριτος. & δυνάμεως*, and so the *Vulgar* has render'd it, *plenus gratia & fortitudine*, a man full of *Charity* or *Grace*, and of *Fortitude* or *Courage* too.

He fears not to call this barbarous, and by all Laws unjustifiable act of theirs, *sin*; and in a manner charges them with it, when he prays God *not to lay it to their charge*.

Neither does their malicious *Fury* (with which they had now surrounded him) nor the apprehension of an imminent cruel Death, which by so many multiplied strokes assaults him on every side, daunt the *Greatness* of his *spirit*, that he should not call it by its own name, as it was, a *Sin*; or disoblige his *Charity*, that he should not pray for its *forgiveness*.

He bespeaks at once their *Conviction* and their *Pardon*; as knowing, they were not likely to be forgiven, without some penitent acknowledgment.

This was the drift of his *Prayer*, that God would not so punish their *sin*, as to deny them *Repentance*. He prays for their *pardon*, and, in order to that, for their *Conversion*.

It is a foolish unwarrantable *charity*, that complies with men in their *sins*; and as to *Gods* enemies, and his *Churches*, and *our own* too, we may and must hate their *vices*, while we wish well to their *persons*.

Upon this account we beseech God in our publick *Litanies*, to *forgive our enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and to turn their hearts. To turn their hearts? Whither? to us? No, that were in effect to pray for our selves, but to turn them to himself; for when their hearts are turned once to God, he will, if he think fit, with ease turn them to us.*

*Gracious Lord*, may I say, and may every one that hears me say; impute not to any enemy of mine, if any I have, or shall have, any *sin* or offence of his, that he hath committed, or shall commit against me; but deal so with *him*, as I hope thou wilt deal by *me*; pardon and forgive him, and turn *his* heart, and turn *my* heart to thee, that so both our hearts may be united and centred in thy Love, and whatever sorry inconsiderable Misunderstandings there have been, or may be betwixt us, yet having our Affections ultimately terminated in thee, we may be filled with the fruits and blessings of *divine Charity*.

And thus much for the *Prayer* it self. The *last* thing to be spoken to, is

IV. The circumstance of *Time*, when he made this *Prayer*; at the very instant of his death, when the stones came thick about him, with threatening messages of it, and with sturdy bangs rung him a dying peal up-  
on

on all parts of his body. And it should seem, the very next blow, he received, did the work effectually; for so it is said, *And having said this, he fell asleep.* In this manner our dying Lord did before, who even at his last gasp pray'd for his enemies.

*Charity* is in a *Christian*, what the *Heart* is in a *natural* man; the first thing that lives, and the last that dyes; and expires not while breath lasts, wherein it may vent it self by prayer.

It was bravely said, *Imperatorem decet stantem mori*, that a *General* should dye standing: and it may as piously and as becomingly be said, *Christianum precantem*, that a *Christian* ought to dye upon his knees. So our St *Stephen* here did, whose *Courage* kept him standing, when he profess'd his Faith, and commended his Spirit to his *Jesus*; and his *Charity* put him on his knees, to pray for his enemies.

Brave *Champion*, excellent *Christian*! who both *standest* in the defence of thy Faith, and *kneelest* in the exercise of thy *Charity*; as knowing both how to *conquer*, and to *submit*; to baffle thy enemies *reason*, and to forgive their *malice*.

This his pardon of his injurious Murderers he makes his last *Will and Testament*, as I may say, and desires God to confirm it, by putting to his *Seal*.

I know, some may take advantage from this, that, as many men love to put off *good works* till Death, it may be time enough then to *forgive our enemies*, when we are upon our death-beds, and ready to take leave of the World; and that it need not perhaps be done before.

But this is to misapply the Example of St *Stephen*, who dying under an actual injury, forgave it, and pray'd for his enemies, while they were murdering him.

It is true, at death, which convinces us of our own Mortality, we should then at least lay down all animosities, and show, that, as Our selves are *mortal*, so our Passions and Enmities are so too: but he that wilfully defers his *forgiveness* till then, is very far from a right bred *Charity*, which Christ has appointed to be an every days exercise, having taught us in our daily Prayer, to ask forgiveness of our Trespases at Gods hands, upon no other terms, but as we forgive them *that trespass against us*.

We spoke before of the blessed returns of this *Prayer* of his, as to some of his enemies; and sure the *Martyr* himself did not go without his share in the gracious effects of his own *Charity*. Upon the saying of these words, *he fell asleep*.

Mind the softness of the Expression, as if he had dyed easie and unconcern'd, though knocked in the head; and the *stones*, which were the instruments of his death, had been by Miracle turned into down-pillows for *sleep* and ease.

*Alas!* had it been but a *sleep*, those repeated thumps would soon have wakened him to a fresh sense of his enemies persevering malice.

It is indeed an *Hebraism*, where the word, which signifies to go to bed, to lie down, *to fall asleep*, imports also, by Metaphor, *to dye*; but sure enough the word was here purposely made choice of.

For how can we imagine, it should with any propriety of speech be said, that a man, who was *stoned* to death, *fell asleep*? unless there were somewhat more then ordinary in the thing; somewhat, I say, of more then usual support and comfort, through divine Assistance, afforded to the person thus dying.

He that hath possest his heart with St. Stephen's faith and charity, may dye with the like ease on a Rack, though beset with the most exquisite torments, witty malice can invent.

*Conse*, a *Philosopher*, tells his insulting enemy, ἀποκλείου δύρασαι, βλάψαι δ' οὐκ, *Kill me thou mai'st, but hurt me thou can'st not*: And can a *Christian*, whose spirit is built upon more advanced Principles of honour, want resolution to encounter and trample upon the greatest Indignities?

The stoutness of his *faith*, and the meekness of his *charity*, deadned the blows of his Persecutors malice, or at least render'd him insensible; and at once defeating their attempts, and frustrating their designs, consecrated the dying *Martyr* to a *Sainthood*, and the *stones*, which in officious throngs came about him, to become a *Chappel of ease*, a καμνήτριον, a *sleeping place*: *He fell asleep*.

And thus have I gone over the *Historical passages*, and treated of this Christian grace of loving our Enemies in *hypothesis*, as it is here represented in St. Stephen's example. A word or two of it in *thesis*, and I have done.

There is no body, that owns himself *Christian*, but must acknowledge his Obligations to the practice of this *Duty*, of *loving our Enemies*, how strange and difficult soever to flesh and blood it may appear.

*Anaxagoras*, in his *Apology*, challenges all the Heathen World, in their Philosophies, Religions or Laws, to shew such a *Precept*. It is a thing doubtless above the pitch of common *Morality*.

The *Jews* themselves, who were the peculiar People of God, either had it not, or had lost it, when our *Saviour* came into the World; who in his Reformation of their *Laws*, or at least their *Manners*, takes particular notice of this defect. *Ye have heard it hath been said*, saith he, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy*. But I say unto you, *love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that persecute you, and do good to them that hate you*. This is the *Christian Law* in downright positive terms.

Matt. 5. 43, 44.

I must confess, that in the Book of *Psalms*, which has been the constant solemn *formular* of Devotions, both in the *Jewish* and the *Christian Church*, there are several Passages, that seem to speak another language and temper, than that *Christ* here requires of us.

But we must know, that *David* spoke as Inspired, and knew who those Enemies of God and his Church were, whose obstinate Malice had devoted them to destruction.

And thus was it with St. *Paul*, in the case of *Hymeneus*, and the *Coppersmith*, and other *Schismatical Gospellers*, who opposed themselves to Apostolical authority, whom he accurses by name.

1 Tim. 1. 20.  
2 Tim. 4. 14.

We therefore, who cannot read those Composures with the same Spirit, wherewith *David* wrote them, I mean as to Prophecy, are to take such Passages for *Predictions* of Vengeance to befall such Enemies, rather than for *Imprecations* of Judgments upon them.

And further we are to understand them in this sense, that we may pray God to confound and destroy their wicked Devices, at the same time, when with the greatest Zeal we pray for the Conversion and Salvation of their Souls, since the doing of both is justified by the same *charity*, that a charity we owe to the Church and the Publick, this a charity we are to pay to every Individual person.

The *Duty* then stands good; let me only lay before you some *Inducements*, that may incite you to the practice of it, in imitation of blessed *Stephen*, and I shall be very brief.



1. First then, *The love of enemies is a Godlike quality.*

Luke 6. 36.  
Matt. 5. 48.

*Be ye merciful, as your Father which is in Heaven is merciful,* says one Evangelist. *Be ye perfect, as he is perfect,* says another; intimating, that *Mercy* is the divine *Perfection*. And wherein does God so much demonstrate this *mercy* of his, as in *loving his enemies*? obliging the bad as well as good with his *rain* and *sunshine* in common Providence, and offering his *Grace* to those, who many times refuse or neglect it. •

For alas! what can any the best of us all expect, much less demand as due, from the hands of a gracious God? who are *unworthy* of those Benefits he daily shows down on us, before we receive them, and as *unthankful* for them, when we have them.

If then the Almighty God thus treats us, who are so conscious to our selves of our evil deservings, with such transcendent Bounty; what are we poor weak Creatures, that we should malign and envy one another, and upon, I know not what, pretence of injuries and discontents, keep our selves at irreconcilable distance from our Brethren?

Rom. 12. 19.

Add to this, that when we consider the erroneousness of our *Judgments*, and the perverseness of our *Wills*, how apt we are to be mistaken in the apprehensions and measures, we make of our Brothers carriage; and withall, that the great God, whatever injuries we may receive, has reserv'd *Vengeance* to himself as his Prerogative, and the main character of his Sovereignty; we cannot but be convinc'd, how dangerous it will be for us, to entertain Rancour and Malice, which will make us so unlike to God who made us, and to the *Son of God* who redeem'd us. For,

2. Again, *This Charity is that, which must render us conformable to our blessed Lord and Master*; who came into the World upon the greatest design of love, when all Mankind was in a state of Enmity against God.

Rom. 5. 7.

Thus the *Apostle* descants upon it, that for a *righteous man* one would scarcely dye; much less for miscreants, sinners, and enemies, as we were, which *Christ* did; who, at his very Passion, not only pray'd, but dyed for those very persons, who shed his precious blood. And agreeably to this it is said of some wicked Hereticks, that they deny'd the *Lord* who bought them.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

Now as all, that our *Saviour* did or suffered for us, was *meritorious*, so it was *exemplary* too: and if we mean to be the better for his *Merit*, we must endeavor to follow his *Example*.

Matt. 5. 46.

Would we then be *Christians* indeed? We must, like our *Master*, *love our enemies*, and do good to those from whom we receive evil; for else if we shew kindness only to those who are kind to us, what do we more, as himself says, then the very worst of Heathens, and vilest of Sinners do?

3. In the last place, not to mention the *good use*, we may make of *enemies*, if we be wise; which requires of us, upon the very square of Justice, to thank God for them, and to pray for them too; since they are commonly *Censores morum*, our Monitors and Spies upon our actions, who will be sure, one way or other, to let us know of our faults; which office, though it proceed not from them out of love, yet is the highest point of *Friendship*, since friendship it self cannot subsist without it; and yet is a thing, wherein *Friends* generally fail, but *Enemies* do seldom or never. For this

is the surest Rule and Standard of love, as it is set down in *Leviticus*, *Thou shalt love thy brother, and shalt not suffer sin upon him.* Lev. 19. 17.

To pass by this, because I would not hold you too long.

Beside the *Excellence* of this Grace, and the *Obligations* which our *Christianity* hath laid upon us, *The great and sure Advantages, with which it is attended,* are enough to recommend it to us; that at present it gains us the noblest *Conquest* over our *selves* and our *Enemies* both, and that for the future it procures us vast *Rewards*.

What is there worthier of a man, or more grateful to him, if he rightly understand himself, then to be Master and Governor of his own *Mind*, to have the command of his *Passions*, to be a *Monarch* at home, and to enjoy a perfect Peace and undisturbed Calm within his own breast? And this no way better to be obtain'd, then by the *love of enemies*, whereby all Enmity, by which our rest may be disturbed, is taken out of the way.

It is indeed *bestial* and brutish, to be sway'd by the *sensual appetite*, and to follow the swinge of *Concupiscence*; but to be transported and carried away with *Passion* is *Ferine*, and no less then *Diabolical*; *hatred, envy, malice, ill will, grudge and revenge*, being both the *sins* and the *torments* of the damned Spirits.

This *Peace* at home, when once attained, will be accompanied with *Victory* abroad. Rom. 12. 10.

Do good to thy enemy, and by that means thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head, says the *Apostle*. How? to destroy and consume him? no, but to melt him down. A *Metaphor* taken from *Mettles*, which resist the Hammer, and yield to the flames.

I know, there are some such unyielding, unrelenting natures, who have made it their resolve, *odisse quem leserint*, never to forgive a man, whom they have misused; that, as if they were calcined and cindered, are, one would think, past the *Chymical* operation of this divine glowing *Virtue*; and yet I dare to affirm even of such, that, if this method be fairly applied, and duly followed, though they may not perhaps be won to be our *Friends*, yet, if they have any ingenuity, they will be ashamed to appear our *Enemies*.

But then, when we make our prospect into the other World, where *Charity* and *Love* is the onely business, that is to employ those Blessed ones; whereupon St *Paul*, in the comparison of the three *Christian graces*, prefers *Charity*, as that which will not only bring us to Heaven, but accompany us in, leaving the other two behind her at the gate; for there will be no employment for *Faith* or *Hope* there, where all is *Vision*, all *Fruition*. 1 Cor. 13. 8.

I say, when we look forward, with what large Interest will our scant *Forgivenesses* be return'd to us there? How will our *Charity*, which taught us to cover the slight Offences of our Brethren, cover a multitude of our own grievous sins? and What mutual Indearments will there be betwixt those, who were perhaps of distant affections on Earth, (for pious persons many times disagree) whose Prayers have reconciled them, and brought them together to Heaven? 1 Pet. 4. 8.

In a word; Have we a holy Emulation to be like God? Would we be men of an excellent Spirit? Have we regard to *Christ* his *Doctrine*, or his *Example*? Would we be *Christians* to purpose? Would we be quiet and

serene within, *victorious* and successful without? Would we improve our future *Glories*, and add Stars and Diamonds to our celestial Crowns? Would we, to take an instance from the Text, fall *asleep* with ease, as St *Stephen* here did, and rise up with joy at the general Resurrection?

Let us pray in the Churches words in this days Office, that God would fill us with his holy Spirit, that by the Example of his first Martyr, who pray'd for his Murderers, we may learn to love and bless our Persecutors, to embrace our Enemies with a hearty kindness, and to requite Injuries with our Prayers and all good Offices; that this our *Charity* may help to bring both them and our selves together into the Kingdom of Heaven. *Amen.*

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A Sermon

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# A Sermon upon the *Holy INNOCENTS* Day,

Preached at St Peters Westminster, Dec. 28. 1676.

## The Gospel of the Day.

### MATTH. II. 13. to 19.

13. *And when they were departed, behold, the Angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his Mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there, until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy him.*
14. *When he arose, he took the young Child and his Mother by night, and departed into Egypt.*
15. *And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son.*
16. *Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the Wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the Wise men.*
17. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying,*
18. *In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.*



Shall not need to quote the custom of the *Jewish Church*, when first Preaching began among them; which was after their return from the *Babylonish* captivity, when they had forgot their own language, in which Scripture was deliver'd to them; so that they were fain to have both the *Lessons* of each day, one out of the Law, the other out of the Prophets, interpreted to them *verse by verse* out of the *Hebrew* into the *Syrick* dialect, which they then better understood; a course set on foot by *Esdra*s the Scribe, and so continued down, as appears by that of the *Acts*, that *Moses* was preached every Sabbath, that is, expounded in that manner. Nor shall I vouch the usage of the *Christian Church* it self, when at the first the Preachers of the Gospel made choice at large of some main subject of Religion, without limiting their discourse either to Text or time.

I shall

Acts 15. 21.

I shall rather think fit to justify my present design, by the practise of the primitive *Fathers*, who, upon such *Festival* occasions, made pious descants upon the whole History of the Day. And that now may be judg'd the more necessary to be done, since people are grown so indiligent generally in their observance of *Holy-days*, wherein yet, beside the Examples of those *Scripture-Saints*, we commemorate in these Anniversaries, propos'd to our imitation, the Church hath scatter'd the most considerable *Articles* of Christian doctrine throughout the course of the Year, as if she had intended her Festivities, as a kind of publick *Catechism* for vulgar instruction.

The Story of this day in particular, presents us with two things observable.

I. *Fuga Christi* ; our Lord's escape into *Egypt*, That in the three first *Verses*.

II. *Cedes Infantum*, the Massacre of the other Infants that staid ; This in the three last *Verses*.

I shall give a short and plain account of the Story, without any Farce of traditional improvements, and shall so deliver it, as to intermix some practical Remarks, and other useful Inferences.

I. First then for *Christ's flight* or *escape*.

No sooner had the *Wise men* paid their Visit of devout Congratulations to the new-born *Messias*, but God out of his infinite wisdom, whether not willing to gratifie vulgar curiosities, having given sufficient means already to excite and satisfie pious inquiries, by these strangers arrival at *Jerusalem*, and that alarm the people took at it ; or whether foreseeing the wicked advantage, the Tyrant *Herod* would make of further discoveries, and more particular informations, should he have permitted the *Magi* to have return'd back to him, as he had partly engag'd them. I say, no sooner had those *Eastern Princes*, for such indeed they were, dispatched the business, they came about, which was to see and worship their Infant-Saviour, but God, by special direction, sends them home into their own Countrey by another way, then that they came ; that by this means he might secure and preserve the holy Child for the performance of those designs, for which he was sent into the World ; his safety at this time lying mainly in his Concealment.

And now, knowing how the Tyrant at *Jerusalem*, ( who thirsted for nothing more then blood, and would never balk any plausible pretence for mischief ) would be inrag'd by this defeat of Providence, in conveying away the *Wise men* ; it was judg'd necessary to remove the young *Prince of peace*, who had been now near upon two years a Sojourner in his Fathers City, from *Bethlehem* out of *Herod's* jurisdiction and reach.

Accordingly a winged Messenger is dispatched to faithful *Joseph*, whom God had made Guardian of his Son during his minority in the flesh, and Protector of his nonage. Such favours were frequent and ordinary to holy persons of old, to have converse with Angels.

He finds *Joseph* asleep, yet nere a whit the less capable of those impressions, which he by his Commission was to make upon his mind. For such is the constitution of humane *souls*, such the nature of those heavenly *spirits*, that they can maintain intercourses without the help of bodily senses. Nay, 'tis the opinion of some speculative Wits, that when the body is laid to rest, and the senses lockt up with sleep, that then the soul of man is most free, and abstracted from gross matter ; and so being near to a kind of separate state, is most fit for angelical interview and correspondence ; and that those Visions, we read of in former times, were not representations

ments made to the outward eye, but were trances of an inlightned imagination, and no other then what *Joseph's* dream was here, who, when eyes and ears were fast, saw an Angel of the Lord appear, and heard him call; and the Appearance was so bright, and the Call so loud, that he was sure he did see and hear, though he were at that time asleep.

He there acquaints him with the mind of Heaven; that for the preservation of the Child, 'twas order'd he must immediately with all speed carry him and his mother into *Egypt*, and there stay till further order; and withall, to hasten his Journey, and to shew how dangerous any the least delay might prove, he tells him, that *Herod*, who never spar'd any one he had the least jealousy of, would shortly make inquiry after the Child, with intention to murder it. For indeed, as Usurpers are always jealous, the news which the *Wise men* had brought to Town about the Birth of a *King*, had troubled him, and put his reason of state into a cold fit of fear, which would certainly end in a hot *paroxysm* of rage and cruelty.

I will not say, but that the very naming of *Herod* might startle righteous *Joseph's* apprehensions out of his sleep, and quicken his obedience when awake. Such good even Tyrants do, when their names are once grown terrible to the inferiour World, that God himself is more carefully regarded, and the better serv'd sometimes for their sakes.

That was not all; though this consideration of danger might add some weight, yet his soul was rightly pois'd before. He was now no stranger to this way of communication with Heaven, and therefore never stood disputing the orders which were brought him, though in a dream.

He knew the young Child committed to his keeping was the greatest pledge of divinity, a trust as much as the World was worth, and if it should miscarry in his hand by his neglect, he thought likely he should be guilty of *Adam's* sin, undo Mankind at once, and bring so much the greater ruine upon the World, by how much it would be less recoverable, there being nothing left to save us, had not the Saviour himself been secure.

He remembred well, that this Angel had reconcil'd his misgiving affections to the heaven-beloved Maid, the Mother of this heavenly Babe: and what with tender pity to her sex and years, what with a virtuous and due regard to her person, what with the fear of God, and veneration of the Holy one, his Child, of whom he was constituted the Foster-father; what with some natural resentments of danger from the thoughts of *Herod's* crafty and bloody Politicks; these reasons added spurs and wings to his obedience.

Up he riseth, and makes all ready for the intended Voyage; nor dares he hazard a stay, till the morning light may guide their journey, but late as it was by night, he takes the young Child and his Mother. An unreasonable hour for a Woman and a Child to travel. But hardship it self in some cases, as in instances of danger, is kindness; and where 'tis perilous to let one alone, 'tis friendly to disturb.

The Mother was well assured, that *Joseph* being a just man, had good warrant for what he did, and therefore as readily obeys him, as he the Angel; and since God has bestow'd her into his care, resolves to follow him at any hour to any fortune, be it at midnight, be it to *Egypt*. A lesson fit for Wives to learn of the Virgin-Spouse.

Thus the whole Family is now on foot, the Mother and the Child, and *Joseph* onely their attendant, without any other retinue. *Joseph* does all services, performs all offices to the young Prince of Heaven; he alone is his Lord Steward, Lord Chamberlain, and now in his jests Master of the Horse; so



so it is, the Master of the Family is or ought to be the great Servant of it; and indeed where people can either live down to nature, or up to grace, there needs no great apparade of servants or provisions; what is superfluous, what is more then necessary, serving for incumbrance more then for use. For alas the busines of shew and ostentation is an empty thing, and if there be any thing in it, it signifieth not so much to the owner, as to the lookers on.

Attendances and carriages would have been combrous by night, and suspicious by day-light. There needed none but *Joseph* in the manage of this affair, more might have render'd it hazardous. Princes are never less safe, then when they venture themselves into too many hands.

Further, our Saviours poverty could not have afforded him these things, which the World calls *conveniences*, and yet which, if we would speak truth, the greatest convenience is to be without; and this poverty of his, as it was design'd to be his disguise, so 'twas now to be his security. They are always safest, that have least to lose.

*Joseph* upon this confidence, having no person about him, that could betray his trust, nothing about him, that could make the least discovery of his purpose, by night takes the young Child and his Mother. The night for privacy, and that very night for haste.

Had he staid longer, but till next morning, *Herod* might have intercepted their escape; or at least the Neighborhood would have come to knowledge of somewhat of it; but now by posting away, he prevented the possibility of the ones doing, or the others knowing any thing, and at once escaped the Tyrants hands, and the Neighbours eyes.

Nor did *Joseph*, nor ought any man in this case, where he is upon duty, care what the men of *Bethlehem* might say of him next morning, when they mist him. For though they knew nothing of his going by night, yet next day they would know that he was gone.

But this *Joseph* ne're concern'd himself in, what they might think or report of his so sudden departure; since there was none there, was to be concern'd in it. He knew they could not say any thing of him, but what was just and righteous; and as to the present business, he had no commission to declare it, or make it known to any one; nay rather, he was oblig'd to keep it with the most reserved secrecie he could.

Besides, he lived there in a very private condition, as a Sojourner, and so there would not be that publick notice taken of his removal.

And further, if there should be any misprision upon his reputation from this action, the time would come, when this danger should be over, that he might return again into his Countrey, and shew to the World, that 'twas safety and duty made him flie.

And indeed at that time, I do find in History, that partly with the dissensions of some of the chief *Jews* among themselves, partly out of fear and hatred together of *Herod*, who being an *Edomite*, had usurped the Kingdom of *Judea*, and made havock of the *Jewish* Nobility, that he thought either were, or might be ill-affected to him; I say, I find that about that time *Egypt* was a solemn Sanctuary, and place of refuge for those *Jews*, who liked not to live in their own Countrey; and some of their Writers tell us, that at *Alexandria* particularly they had a stately Temple, with Priests, and a multitude of citizen *Jews*, as if it had been another *Jerusalem*.

These three then, *Joseph*, the *Mother*, and the *Child*, in the name of the blessed Trinity (of whom one of the Travellers himself made one) are set forward for *Egypt*.

And

And there by the blessing of God they safely arrived. I shall not undertake to set down the Stages of the Journey, nor give you a Journal of it. How many days or months they were a going, whether they travelled all along in the night-time for secrecie, or whether days as well as nights for speed; Scripture has not inform'd us, as neither that whether they travelled on foot, or made use of a Beast of burthen, as Painters represent it. We shall not discourse of those things, where *Scripture* is silent; though *Legends* might help us out, but content our selves rather with a pious ignorance, then out of Curiosity or Superstition give heed to Fables.

The time of their continuance or stay there is expressly set down, that they were there till the death of *Herod*, and that was not very long, not above two years.

How *Joseph* and his Family would make shift for a subsistence among strangers, will be no question to any one, that remembers the *Gold* that was presented to our Saviour in the beginning of the Chapter, to that very end and purpose, some Interpreters tell us, to supply him in this necessity. This serv'd to defray the charges of the Journey, and to settle them, when they came thither.

Such care did God take for his Son, that his wants should be supplied by honourable ways; that being not born to a foot of land in his own Country, he might keep his Infant-court with the Revenues of his Foreign Tribute; and that through the whole course of his life, it might be *honestas paupertas*; he should be entertain'd in a mean, but not a reproachful condition.

Besides, I am told by a *Jewish* Writer, that there was at that time a publick provision made for all that fled from *Jewry* in *Herod's* time into *Egypt*, out of a common joint stock at *Alexandria*, whence *Joseph*, amongst the rest, might be supplied.

But after all, may some one say, what need was there at all that Christ should go into *Egypt*? could not God have preserv'd him in *Judea* as well? Yes without doubt, such is his Omnipotence, that he can do what he please, but such his Wisdom too, that he will not do all he can. He maketh use of ordinary means, usually to bring extraordinary things to pass.

Our Saviours whole life was full of miracles, yet though he said he might have done so, we do not find him calling down Regiments of Angels for his assistance; but applying himself in dangers to prudential methods, withdrawing, scaping through the press, and the like.

Mat. 26. 53.

Means are to be used by us then, since God himself doth not in his greatest concerns neglect them, and the success of those means is both to be desired of God, and to be ascribed to him. If we act like men, God will act with us, and make rational undertakings successful. He that relies upon what God can do, and does not apply to those means and ways, by which things are to be done, may, for ought he knows, want a maintenance and preservation, and by his own improvidence forfeit the benefits and advantages of Gods common Providence.

Joh. 10. 39.

Thus God disciplin'd his own Son up from his childhood, into a constant observance of common Providence; nor are extraordinary things to be expected, where ordinary ones may serve the turn; and yet the event may be extraordinary too.

Every thing in our Saviour's Story was extraordinary, yet the conveyances most of them ordinary and obvious, and herein appears the great wisdom

dom of God, in bringing strange and miraculous events from ordinary causes.

The Restauration cannot be judg'd by any considering person, less then a miracle; yet every body knows the causes, and their manner of working, and the progress they made. It was Gods doing, yet the counsel and manage of the business lay in the hand of man too.

Wonderful likewise were his Majesties preservations, and yet perform'd by natural means. He was preserv'd in his youth for a Crown, our Saviour in his preserv'd and kept all along for a Cross, and for that very Reason away now he is forced to *Egypt*, that he may get out of *Herod's* clutches, and that hour of his might not be prevented.

But here's more then that too; here's a Prophecy was to be fulfilled, *that it might be fulfill'd which was spoken of the Lord by the Prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I call'd my Son.*

Hof. 11. 1.

Why! think you, did our Saviour go into *Egypt* on purpose to make good what the Prophet *Hosea* had said of him, or rather did not *Hosea*, being a Prophet, so foretell by inspiration?

The truth of it is. A thing doth not therefore come to pass, because it was foretold it would; but it was foretold, because it was to come to pass. For the truth of an assertion, depends upon the truth of the thing, not contrarily. A thing is so or so, not because I say it is, or is to be so or so; but I having a regard to truth, say it is so, because I see it is, or is to be so.

We are then to understand this form of speech in the citation of Prophecies, *That it might be fulfilled*, not always *quoad finem*, but *quoad speciem*, or *modum actionis*, i. e. that it was done not merely to that end, that a Prophecy might be fulfill'd, but in that manner that a Prophecy was fulfilled, as 'tis verse 17. upon the slaughter of the children: *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet.*

Psal. 149. 8.

I give you this *distinction* the rather, because there have been a wicked sort of People in the World, who have pretended to justify the most villainous and unwarrantable actions, by their fulfilling of Prophecies; as that of *binding Kings in chains, and Nobles with links of iron*, and the like. *Judas* himself, Traytor as he was to his blessed Lord, was a great Fulfiller of Prophecies, yet that was far from excusing his treachery and covetousness; nor was *Herod's* cruelty here e're a whit the less blameable, because he also as you heard, in doing what he did, fulfill'd a Prophecie.

But how was this Prophecie here fulfilled by our Saviours going to *Egypt*, and staying there? *Out of Egypt have I called my Son.* Why? he was to be called into *Egypt* first, that afterward he might be call'd out, as we find he was, ver. 19. After *Herod's* death the Angel appears again to *Joseph* in *Egypt*, and bids him return to his own Country.

Mat. 2. 23.

Now this Prophecie was primarily intended of *Israel* in the History, and no less principally of *Christ* in the Mystery; and 'tis easie to shew, that the holy Writers thought themselves at liberty to accommodate passages out of the Old Testament, and apply them in the New to *Christ*, upon the account and authority of the same Spirit, which equally inspired those Writers of the Old Testament, and these of the New; which were designed only for sacred allusions, as in the close of this Chapter: *He shall be called a Nazarene*, which words are no where expressly set down; only *Isaiah* calls him *Netzer*, נצר an appellative word, which signifies a branch, which

St Mat-



St Matthew makes a proper name, as if it had been נצרי, a Nazarene, and not as some have said, from being נזיר, a Nazarite, for they are two different Letters.

We come to the second general Head, the slaughter of the Infants, *Infanticidium*.

II. Having seen our Saviour safely arrived and lodg'd, let us return, and see what is to do in Jewry.

Herod, when he saw he was mocked, was exceeding wroth: In the tide of his passions one while cursing himself for a Fool for letting them go, or at least for not sending Officers with them; another while desperately vowing revenge upon the whole Nation.

He had before fished himself upon the Sanhedrim, of whom he had left only so many, as might serve at last for a Sacrifice to his revengeful policy; having ordered them to be kill'd just at his departure, that his death might not afford the people so much joy, as the murder of their Nobles would cause them grief; Now therefore he sticks not at children. This was the first Persecution of the Infant-Church.

He sends his Gendarms, his Janizaries to slay all the children in Bethlehem, to make sure work, to make the house of bread a shambles, and in all the coasts thereof, limited from two years old and under, according to the time, סוף חורב which he had diligently inquired.

Why two years? He would take rather more than less; so violent a thing is tyrannous jealousy, when ambition and cruelty act join'd in Commission. For supposing they were a year a coming, and inquiring, that was the most; yet two years was a moderate satisfaction for his rage.

Unmanly and inhumane Tyrant, to fall on children, that could neither give thee provocation, nor make thee resistance! Well might Augustus the Emperor say, that he had rather be *Herodis porcus*, quam *filius*, Herod's Swine, then his Son; for his Religion as a Jew, which he pretended himself to be, though he were indeed an Edomite, would make him forbear the one; but his tyrannous jealousy would oblige him to be cruel, even to his own Relations, having sent two of his own Sons out of the World upon that very account.

And now what could other Parents expect, when he spared not his own children?

Yet see, how his rage blinds and fools him, he misses his aim, and *Andabaturum more*, fights with his own shadow.

What but a Devil could give such Orders? What but Devils could execute them? so true is that, where interest and passion are in the way; *Homo homini diabolus*, Man is to man a devil.

Yet see, here's Scripture too, a Prophecy to be fulfill'd; thus the Devil himself could say, *Scriptum est*, It is written.

Mat. 4. 6.

Then was fulfilled. O sad Prophecy! O sadder completion! the dismal execution of Scripture, and (as they now phrase it) of the Country too.

In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning.

Ye that are mothers of children, do but think what a frightful sorrowful spectacle it would be, to have your dearest pledges torn and ravish'd out of your embraces, your bowels rent in pieces before your eyes.

See the rude Soldiers with several Instruments of War attacking innocent Cradles, and the weak Nurses arms.

It may be a question, whether the shrieks and groans of mothers, or military shouts and clashing of Armour, serv'd more to drown the cries of children.

It passes all Rhetorick to lay open this Scene of dolour, what should I say, what might I not say?

How do the poor creatures, who are concern'd but in the beholding of this Tragedy, pour forth direful Imprecations upon the Villains, who were Actors? since the Tyrant himself was so much Tyrant, that they durst not so much as open their mouths in complaint of him!

See some with reluctancy clipping the Mothers and Nurses breasts, others unconcernedly with manly aspect entertaining death; while the brains of some were dashed out, others bowels ript, others heads chopt off, and their limbs with various sport of cruelty mangled, and the Parents bosoms and streaming breasts sprinkled with Infants blood.

Sweet harmless Babes, what became of your Angels? had you at that time no Friend in Heaven? were they all gone along with your Saviour to guard his flight? could not the City of *David* defend you? and why was there not an Angel sent to your Fathers too!

1sa. 63. 3.

No, dear little ones, think not amiss of your blessed Lord, to whom you bear this glorious testimony this day; His time is not yet come, yours is the present, his is to come; His very preservation is but a reservation for greater sufferings, when he must tread the Wine-press alone.

Had your Parents been acquainted with his Fathers intention, there's never a Mother any of you had, but would have betrayed God's Son, rather than have lost her own.

Well! then must you fall a Sacrifice to tyrannical revenge, that your blood may be an atonement for your Lords escape.

2 Sam. 18. 3.

So little Champion he is to you, as *David* your Grandfather was to the rest of *Israel*, *Princeps juventutis*, worth 10000 of your lives.

Further, 'tis your great advantage; for by this Martyrdom ye are baptized with your own blood into the Church Triumphant, without expecting the meaner admission by water, to give you an entrance into the Church Militant; and yet ye have done what we all at the Font engage to do; *fought under Christ's banner, and been his faithful Servants and Souldiers unto your lives ends.*

Happy children, ye have taken your degrees of glory *per saltum*, by standing in the front of the *Noble Army* of *Christian Martyrs*.

Now, *Rachel*, be comforted, weep no more, thy children are still, and they are happy, infinitely more happy than if they had staid here with thee. So it goes on in the Prophet *Jerem.* 31. 16, 17. *Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thy eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, and they shall come again. And there's hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border.*

Rev. 14. 4.

Blessed *Innocents*, ye were the *first fruits* to God, and to the Lamb, as 'tis in the *Epistle* of the Day: ye were the firstlings of Christs flock, and without disparagement to St *Stephen*, his true *Proto-Martyrs*.

Learn we from the Story, to part from our dearest concerns, when God calls, and his cause requires; and from these children let us learn to be as they, not in knowledge, but in innocence and sufferings, whose innocence rendred them *Lilly-white*, and their suffering *Rosy-red*.

This

This as it prov'd to their blessed advantage, so it was to *Christs* also; for the Tyrant not long survives this carnage, and then *Christ* returns, and was no more molested, that we read of, till he undertook his Prophetick Office at the age of 30, having all the intermediate time free for his preparation.

May God *strengthen us* so by his grace, that by the *innocency of our lives, and constancy of our faith even unto death, we may*, as these Holy Innocents did, *glorifie his holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord*; to whom the Eternal Son of God, together with the Father and blessed Spirit, three distinct Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, be all Glory, Honour and Power, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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A Sermon

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Upon St. *ANDREW's* Day :

*A Sermon Preached at St. Peters Westminster,*

*November 30. 1678.*

St. Matth. I V.

18. *And Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the Sea; [for they were fishers.]*
19. *And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you Fishers of men.*
20. *And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.*



He holy *Jesus* having bin inaugurated to his *Prophetick Office* Chap. 3. by the descent of the *Spirit* and a *Voice* from Heaven, when he was baptized of *John* in *Jordan*, and immediately after that by the *Spirit* led from thence into the *Wilderness*, and there put upon a solemn *Tryal* and *Probationership* for the exercise of his *Mins-terial* function in his *fourty days Fast* and *Temptation*, of which we have an account in this 4<sup>th</sup> *Chapter*; we find him in the *verse* before the *Text* actually entring upon his *Office*. From that time *Jesus* began to *Preach* and to say, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*; which is the very form of words his *Fore-runner* had used before. From that time, that is, after he was come into *Galilee* and having left *Nazareth* came and dwelt in *Capernaum*, as it is ver. 13.

Now for the better Execution of this *Office of preaching*, of making known the *Will of God* and calling sinners to *Repentance*, and for the continuance of the work of the *Gospel* after his own departure, and the propagation of *Christian Doctrine* over the *World*, he himself having confin'd his own walk within the *Land of Jewry*; he found it was necessary, at least judg'd it expedient to choose and take unto him some *Disciples* for the constant *Attendance* of his *Person* and *Assistance* in the *Work*, twelve in number according to the *Tribes of Israel*, of which there were twelve *Princes*, whom in the 10<sup>th</sup> *Chapter* he sends forth with a *Com-mission*

mission to preach to the *Jews* only, using the same Form of words, as he himself and the *Baptist* had done: from which Mission or Sending forth they were called *Apostles*.

Besides these *twelve*, he appointed other *Seventy* also, like the *seventy Elders* whom *Moses* took to him for his Assistance, *Num*, 11. 16. and those also for the Ministerial Function.

Those *twelve* were to be of a higher rank and more eminent place in the Church of *Christ*, into whose place and stead *Episcopal* dignity was to succeed. These *Seventy* were of a lower Order, upon which bottom the common *Priesthood* stands. This as it is the sense of pious *Antiquity*, so it is the fundamental reason of the diversity of *Orders* in the Church.

The Election and Ordination of two of those *twelve* we have the Story of, in the Words I now read to you. And *Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee*, saw two brethren, &c. where we have three main parts.

I. The Occasion; that, as he was walking along by the Sea-side, he saw the two brethren about their ordinary employ.

II. The Call; which was to take them off that Employment, and to put them upon a nobler, yet not unlike Exercise.

III. Their Obedience; that they readily left what they were about, and immediately entred themselves into his and the Gospels Service.

I. First, the Occasion contains in it  
Several Circumstances of time and place.  
Some Characters of the two Persons.

I. The Time, when this was done, is implied in the particle *And*. And *Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee*, saw two brethren: by which it appears, that it was not long after he began himself to preach, that he called these two and the rest of the *twelve* to his Assistance; so it is in the 6th verse before. From that time *Jesus began to preach*; and then presently, as he walked by the Sea-side, seeing these two brethren he called them.

Which might not be nevertheless, and certainly was not so presently neither; but that he had by his *Doctrine* and some *Miracles* given some proof first to the World, that a great Prophet, the great Prophet, was arisen; and that he had gathered several *Disciples* in the larger sense, I mean ordinary hearers and followers, whom his *Discourses* and *Works* had convinced into a belief of his divine Commission.

Having therefore made this fair step into publick knowledge, and confirmed his Authority to the people, he now thinks of taking to him some Associates, select Disciples, who might be companions of Life and partners of Labour. These were to be the Confidants of his Counsels, the Intimates of his Friendship, the Ministers of his Word, the Pillars of his Church, and the Witnesses of his Cause both in Life and Death; most of them all but one, Sealing with their blood the Truth of what they taught from the Discoveries of their gracious Master, and the Influences of his blessed Spirit.

Among those, who were to be of this number, these two brethren, Peter and Andrew, were to have the Preheminence, the Honour and Favour of the first call; and upon this account Peter stands first and has the Precedence in all the Rolls of the Apostles, as to the Priority and Seniority of his call, and not for any other pretended privilege.

Blessed

*Blessed Pair*, to whom your *gracious Lord* first deign'd his heavenly Familiarities, vouchsafed his earliest Friendship, and gave you so timely an Advancement in his Service, that you appear the *first-born* in the Regeneration.

*Happy Brethren*, who had your call into the Vineyard in the *first hour*! The greater your *Labour*; true; but withall the higher your *Dignity*, the larger your *Reward*!

May I, and such as I am, have the happiness to be call'd at any time, be it the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, before the day of Grace shut in; and may I be thought worthy to be an *Ostarius*, a dorekeeper, if not of that *sacred Colledge*, whereof you were principal Members, yet of Gods *house* in general, whereof you were such eminent Guides and Patterns.

This for the *Time*; next for the *Place*.

It was as he was walking *by the Sea of Galilee*; which is otherwhere called the Sea of *Tiberias*, a large Town scituated upon it, and the same with the Lake of *Genezareth*; for so indeed it was in strictness of speech but a *Lake*; yet according to Scripture-phrase, which terms any great Water, even the great Vessel in *Solomon's Temple*, a *Sea*; so, in respect of its vast compass, it might deserve the name of *Sea*.

I shall not now stand to give you the *Topography* or full description of it, being we are only upon the *beach*, to take a turn or two upon the shoar-side, and to look, as our Saviour here did, upon the *Fishermen*. For it was *Lacus piscosus*, a Lake that abounded with fish; and by that means maintain'd several poor Families in their fishing trade, and helped to make Provisions plentiful to the Neighbour-Country, which being so very populous might have lived but uneasily, had it not been for the good Neighbourhood of this Sea.

For this reason some *Criticks* tell us, it is called *Galilee of the Nations*, that is, by an Hebraism, *Galilee* full of people: though others turning the Proper name into an Appellative, interpret גליל הנוצרים *confinium Gentium*, the boundary or limit of *Palestine*, by which it was divided from the neighbouring Nations, which on that side bordered upon it. And so it might, as to that part of the Coutry, serve also for a Bulwark of defence to the *Holy Land*.

Nor only so; but by convenience of Boats it gave great Advantage for *Resort* and *Traffick*, which might be one cause too to render it so populous. From this opportunity of *Traffick* it was, that St *Mathew*, whilst a *Publican*, kept his *tolt-booth*, to take account of goods imported or exported.

Upon both these Considerations, that *Galilee* was so populous, and in the borders and marches of *Palestine*, it is more then probable, that the Son of God made choice of *Galilee* for the place of his Residence, where he first entred upon his Prophetic Office, that he might have the greater opportunities of teaching his *Doctrine*, and shewing his *Miracles* amidst throngs and multitudes of People; and that, though he himself scarce ever went in person out of *Judea*, yet the neighbour-Nations might be favour'd with some glimpses of his Divinity, who was to be a *Light to lighten the Gentiles*.

Luk. 2. 32.

Though after all he was content without his expected and deserved success: for neither *Discourses* nor *Miracles* could prevail with many, with most of them to come in to the Faith and Profession of *Christ*. Hence it is that he upbraides *Capernaum* and *Bethsaida*, places which he had

Mat. 11. 21,  
23.



had innobled with his Presence, with his divine *sayings* and his mighty *doings*, for their unbelief and impenitence. And the like Entertainment he found upon tryal on the opposite Heathen-shore; where the *Gadarens*, a people as churlish as their swine, declared their dislike of his chargeable Miracles, and though he had so highly oblig'd the Country, as to dispossess it of a whole *Legion*, to disband a whole Regiment of *Devils* at once; yet the loss of their *swine* made it a thankless and a fruitless Office; *thankless* to him that performed it, and *fruitless* to them, for whom it was performed.

Luk. 8. 26.

The foresight of this ill reception, and afterward the experience of it made not our blessed Lord ere a whit the less in love with *Galilee*. Here he pitched his abode, for he dwelt at *Capernaum*. Happy place, to have had such a glorious Inmate, hadst thou had grace to have understood thy happiness! Hence he chose his *Apostles* most, if not all of them *Galileans*. *ἄνδρες Γαλιλαῖοι*, *Ye men of Galilee*, as the Angel calls them, was a Compellation of as *Rhetorical* a strain, and that sounds as well, as that usual one of the *Greek* Orator's to his fellow Citizens, *ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι* *Ye men of Athens*. Here it was *by the Sea of Galilee*, that the blessed *Jesus* was walking at this time.

Mat. 4. 13.

*Walking* was his constant Exercise, to find out Objects of spiritual and corporal Mercy. This account *St Peter* gives of him, that *he went about*, walkt over all the Countrey ere he had done, beginning from *Galilee*; but he did not walk onely for the walkes sake. *He went about*, saith he, *doing good and healing all manner of Diseases*. *He went about*, as the *Sun* goes his round, to dispence light and warmth, to communicate Life and Vigour to every thing, his active beams light upon. All his *steps*, whither ever he went, drop fatness.

Aq. 10. 38.

O may every *pious Soul* not miss to meet him in his *walks*! and sure enough it may, it shall do so, if it self continue to keep in his *ways*.

The *Devil* also is a great Walker, as himself tells God in *Job*, upon his demand whence he came; *he walks too and fro, up and down, in the Earth*; but it is upon a destructive design, *to seek whom he may devour*.

Job. 1. 7.  
1 Pet. 5. 8.

Let *Jesuits* boast their Travels and their Walks, it is not the Example of the holy *Jesus*, they follow; but that of a worse Spirit, who orders his walks for mischief and ruin to mankind.

*Jesus was walking*. We seldom meet with him otherwise then on foot; onely once, when he was to make his triumphal Entrance into the City, and that to fulfil a Prophecy too, *Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and riding upon an Ass and the foal of an Ass*. It should seem that then for the greater State and Solemnity, he made use of *both* by turns.

Matt. 21. 5.

Another time there was, as Tradition tells us, or at least as Painters represent it, that we find him mounted; when in his Infancy he made his escape into *Egypt*.

So unwearied was his love, that, even to his bodily weariness, with indefatigable pains he walkt up and down, to scatter Health to the sick and Salvation to sinners. He took a survey of the whole Countrey, measured it with his own paces, and streamed forth blessings where ever he came. It fared with all *places*, with all *persons*, that touched him, or he them, that came near him, or that he came near, as it did with the *Woman* that had the issue of blood, that they found *virtue* come from him. And so it was here.

Mar. 5. 30.

As he was walking along, *he saw these two brethren.* He *saw* them. I do not take this his seeing of them to have bin casual. He *saw* them so, as that he *foresaw* them too, in the eternal Counsel of his Election. He *saw* them, as he *saw Nathanael*, before he came at them, or they at him. He *saw* them fit for his choice, for his service; at last by seeing them he made them so. He lookt *Peter* and his brother *Andrew* here into *Faith and Compliance*; as he did afterwards look *Peter*, upon his denial of him, into *Repentance*.

Joh. 1. 48.

Luke, 22. 61.

This is not all, that the *sight* was not casual, by chance; but further I doubt not to beleive, that this was not the first sight he had of them. He had not onely *foreseen* them in his *Election*, which made him come now purposely to see them and give them a *Call*; but he had in all likelihood *seen* them *before* too, before this time.

For so another Evangelist *St John*, who in the later part of this Gospel here, was one of the other *two brethren*, Fishermen too, that were call'd presently after, gives the account of *Peter* and *Andrew* in a different manner; because it must be supposed at a different time and upon a different occasion.

Joh. 1. 37.

ver. 39.

ver. 41. 42.

He tells us, that, as *Jesus* passed by, the *Baptist* giving an honourable Character of him, *Andrew* one of his Disciples being then present, and hearing what his then Master said, was tempted with a holy Curiosity to make further inquiries. He goes after him, stays with him all the day; and is so well satisfied with his Reception, that he goes straightway to find out his brother *Simon*, tells him the Story *how* he had met with the *Messias*, and brings him along with him to *Jesus*.

This is quite another business from what we have here:

That of *St John* was then the *first* sight that they had of *Christ*, or he of them; 'tis like, they were not yet called. This of *St Matthew* the *second* at least, when they received their Call.

That Interview and Conference there, was but the Introduction into Acquaintance; *This* here was a perfect Ingagement into Service; when they left their nets, their former Trade and Employ, and followed him, henceforward giving themselves up intirely to his Attendance and Disposal.

And thus from the Circumstances of *time* and *place*, when and where this transaction was manag'd between *Christ* and these *two Fishermen*: we come next to speak of the Character of the *persons*, now chosen to be *Apostles*.

As to their Number; *two*.

As to their Relation; *brethren*.

As to their Names; *Simon* called *Peter* and *Andrew* his brother.

As to their Trade or Profession; *Fishermen*.

As to their present Employment; what they were a doing, when he walkt by and saw them; they were *casting a net into the sea*. He *saw two brethren, &c.*

These *particulars* I shall lightly touch at by way of *Postill*, yet so, as not to neglect any thing, may come in our way that may be of use either for *Meditation* or *Practice*.

I. First *Two*. He saw *two*. *Pythagoras* hath reproached the number of *two*, as the worst of numbers; because it is the first departure from Unity.

Unity. But God, who made all things in *Number, Weight, and Measure*, hath sufficiently justified this number among the rest, by making all our most useful parts in *Pairs*; our selves of two essential parts, *Body and Soul, Flesh and Spirit*; Human nature of two Sexes; *Male and Female created he them*; and these *two* made *one* again by Marriage. Two *Tables* of the Law, two *Covenants*, two *Testaments*. In the Mysteries of our Religion, as there are *three Persons* in one Essence of the Godhead, so there are *two natures* in one Person of Christ.

Gen. 1. 27.  
Gen. 2. 24.

But to proceed in these like descants would be a nicety even to impertinence.

The *Wise man* has pronounced a *Wo*, to him that is alone; and commends *two* in several Instances of Life.

Ecc. 4. 10.

*Solitude*, to be alone, I confess may do very well for Contemplation and for Closet-devotion, when we are before him who seeth in secret. But for the Duties of an active life, Company, *two* does better; when by sharing one anothers Cares and Greifs, and by imparting one to another mutually their Joys and Satisfactions, they lessen the *Trouble* and heighten the *Comfort* one of another. Thus a heavy Burthen becomes easy to *two*, which to *one* would have bin insupportable. And on the other hand, when one lends light to anothers Candle, he doth at once brighten and improve his own.

Mat. 6. 6.

This is that which through all ages, in all places of the World, hath made the name of *Friendship* sacred and dear; that being, if it be right Friendship, a mutual Communication of Souls, of Interests, and of all Concerns.

Our Saviour taught this; *where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*; implying that *two* Persons, so met, make a *Christian Congregation*. And his Practice was alike; sending his Disciples *two by two*. To this we may apply that, *Ne Hercules, ne Diabolus quidem, contra duos*. Two such, so met, so sent, in Christs name shall be too hard for any *one*, to try against, be it the Devil himself.

Mat. 18. 20.  
Mar. 6. 7.

I know, *Good Company*, in the common and abused Notion of it, is ordinarily made *honestamentum Vitii*, and passies for a plausible excuse of Debauchery; but take it in a good, that is, in the right sense, it is *firmamentum Virtutis*, a strengthening and security of Virue; and *Christ* himself has promised, that where *two* are met in *his name*, that is, upon a good account, he will vouchsafe them his Presence and Assistance.

And so certainly it was here with these *two*; they were together in *Christ's name*, though at the ordinary works of their Calling; for *Christ* comes in to them, and honours them with a higher Calling for their diligence in that.

And sure, they were the more cheerful at their work, and ne're a whit the less acceptable to *Christ*, that they were,

2. *Brethren*. Christ chose several of his *Apostles* by pairs, for mutual Assistance and Indearment. Thus the *two* next in the later part of this Gospel, *James and John*, were brethren too, Sons of *Zebedee*. Thus stood *Peter and Andrew* in a natural relation, upon which now a Spiritual relation, a Supernatural one, is Superinduced. Now they are *Fratres in Christo*, brethren in the Lord; and the Indearments of the obligation are much enhanced.

*Brother and Sister* was the usual Compellation of every Christian man



and woman at first. It was a Calumny that some Heathens put then upon Christians, that by these terms of kindness they improved *Adultery* into *Incest*. I wish it were not too true, that of late some *Christians* themselves, if I may so call them, put as great a reproach upon Christianity, who use these terms only for a knavish Combination of worldly Interest.

Psalm. 133. 1.

O how happy a thing it is, says the *Psalmist*, to see *brethren dwell together in Unity*! A happy thing sure to dwell so, when it is so happy a thing to see it; and yet so unhappy is the Temper, the Distemper of men, that it is almost as rare, as 'tis a happy thing, to see it.

*Cain* slew his brother *Abel*, when he made the 4<sup>th</sup> part of the World. *Ishmael* persecuted *Isaac* son of the same Father, and *Esau* vow'd the death of half himself, his Twin-brother *Jacob*. And the same pernicious humour has run and does still in the World.

Neither the neer ties of *Nature*, nor the stricter ones of *Religion*, can hold us together. Any little or no provocation makes us *enemies*; who were born and obliged to be *friends*. Every slight Prejudice alienates us from one another, and a petty Difference of Judgment engages the Affections to side with it, till at last we are got to an irreconcilable distance, and can give no reason *why* we are so, but only because we are so.

O that we, who pretend to own one God, might worship him with one Heart, and confess him with one Mouth, and serve him with one shoulder; that common danger might now at last cement our Divisions, and reunite us into one Interest; whereby we might the better be enabled to stand and bear up against that shock of Destruction, which the known Adversary of our *Laws* and *Religion* threatens to bring, nay is, for ought we know, bringing upon us.

Surely *these brethren* here were of another mind, then Christian brethren are of nowadays, that is, they were of the same mind, and lovingly agreed in the common Work of their ordinary Calling, and afterward, no question, as lovingly agreed in Gospel-work; to which here they had an extraordinary Call.

*Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother*: the word again repeated, to shew that now they were to be *brethren* upon a double account of *Generation* and *Regeneration* both.

Matt. 16. 18.

3, *Simon called Peter*; When so called? now upon his Call, Christ naming him in the *Syrick* language *Cephas*, which in the *Greek* is rendered Πέτρος and signifies a *Rock* or *Stone*. And, says Christ, *upon this Rock will I build my Church*: which refers not to *Peter's* person; for then he would have said, ἐπὶ τῷ Πέτρῳ, upon *Peter* himself; but he says ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ upon *this Rock*, that is, upon the strong Foundation of that Faith, which *Peter* had in the name of them all profest.

It is true, *Peter* every where stands first upon the Roll, which may bespeak a *Priority*, that he was the *Senior Apostle*, but cannot Argue any *Superiority* over the rest; much less that he was to be an *Universal Pastor*, who should exercise an Authority, as *Christ's Vicar*, upon all his Fellows, in their several Provinces and Districts, whither they were to go after their Lord's departure.

Now so far was *Peter* from such an incroachment, that he keeps modestly within his bounds, and his *Epistle* though general, he directs

to those of the *Dispersion*, that is, to the poor *Christian Jews*, that were scattered abroad in *Asia*; as being the *Apostle of the Circumcision*; whereas it was *St Paul's* Prerogative to be the *Doctor of the Gentiles*, who among others of those *Gentiles* writes to the *Romans* themselves.

Gal. 2. 8.

2 Tim. 1. 11.

But be this how it will; let them bestow what Priviledge or Preheminence they please upon *St Peter*, and let the *Bishop of Rome* be his Successor. This bright Diamond had its *flaws* as well as its lustres. He denied his *Master* and bound his denial with oaths; it need not be a question whether his *successors* have done so too, who have undermin'd the very Fundamentals of *Christian Religion*.

I shall produce but *two Instances*, wherein we may compare *St Peter* with those, who pretend to derive from him; one is in point of his *Doctrine*, the other in regard of his *Example*. He lays it down for a Rule; *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of man; whether to the King as Supreme; &c.* and bids us, as we would be thought, to *fear God, to Honour the King*. This is his *Doctrine*: he scruples not the *Kings Supremacy*. What do his *Successors* teach? That it is lawful for one in *Peter's Chair* to depose or excommunicate *Kings*, and then for any one to murder, assassins, or any way to remove them. This is their avowed *Doctrine*; this has bin their wicked *Practice*. What would *St Peter*, what would *Christ* himself, the Prince of Peace say to such a man? Surely what he said to *Peter* himself in another case. *Get thee behind me Satan.*

1 Pet. 2. 13.

Mat 16. 23.

Then as to *St Peters Example*, he was a married man. We read of his *Wives Mother*, and we owe an ancient Coppy (as they tel us) of the *Greek Bible* to his Daughters pen: and so were several others of the *Apostles* too; *St Paul* takes notice, and vouches his own Liberty to do the like. What do they do? They damn a *married Preijthood*, and prefer *Concubinage* in that Order before *Marriage*, which the *Apostle* tels us, is *Honourable among all men*. What would their Predecessor say to this? what doth his brother *Paul* say, who took up *Peter* himself upon a much smaller matter? Why he calls it *the Doctrine of Devils*, the *forbidding to marry*, 1 Tim. 4. 3.

Mat. 8. 14.

1 Cor. 9. 5.

Heb. 13. 4.

What should I meddle with this *Camarina* any further, when a Religion, which pretends it self to be the *Catholick* and only Religion in the World, is so suited to carnal Lusts and worldly Interests, so contrary to all Rules of Morality as well as of Religion, as if it were the direct *Antipodes* to primitive Christianity?

But enough and perhaps too much of *St Peter*. Somewhat of his brother, the *saint* of the Day, and I hasten towards a Conclusion.

Saint *Andrew* has little said of him in Scripture; we shall not eek it out with fabulous Tradition.

He is reckoned by *St Matthew*, the *second*, that is, next to his Brother; though *St Mark* and *St Luke* too, *Act. 1. 13.* make him the *fourth* in Order, by placing *James* and *John*, who were of the next Call, betwixt them, that they might set him next to *Philip* his Townsman.

Matt. 10. 2.

Mar. 3. 18.

The two Brothers were born, it should seem, at *Bethsaida*, which

is

is therefore called the City of *Andrew* and *Peter*, John, 1. 44. but they dwelt at *Capernaum* together in one house; whence that which, *St Matthew* calls *Peter's* house, *St Luke* *Simon's* house, *St Mark* says was the house of *Simon* and *Andrew*. And as they lived so they loved and drove the same Trade of fishing together.

But not to give away all the Priviledges to *St Peter*, *St Andrew* may demand his share as a *Brother*, as an *Apostle*. For he had this Advantage which we do not Find *Peter* had, that he was a Disciple of the *Baptist*, before he came to *Christ*; and so had helpt to prepare his way; and that he of himself followed *Christ* to his lodging, and there acquainted himself with the *Messias* first, and then conducted and brought his brother *Simon* to him: for which or some like reason *St John* places *Andrew* before *Peter*.

Joh. 1. 40.

Joh. 1. 44.

4. We come in the last place to their *Employment*; of which a word or two, and we have done.

They were *Fishermen*, illiterate persons, of mean Education; which made for the Reputation of the *Gospel*, that it could not be lookt upon as a thing of human Invention, acquired by Study; but came immediately from God, who enabled the preachers of it, these *Fishermen*, with extraordinary Gifts and miraculous Powers

Nor is this any Incouragement or Justification for *Lay-teachers*, to take upon them *holy Offices*: since now *Miracles* are ceased, and ordinary means are to be applied to, and human knowledges are consecrated to the service of the *Temple*.

The *Apostles* were *inspired*; and their very *Ordination* qualified them. When their *Hands* were filled, which was the ancient Form of consecrating *Priests*; their *Heads* were filled with Knowledge, and their *Hearts* with Grace.

But for any person to venture upon the *Ministry* without *Call* or *Qualification* is a horrible Presumption; such run without sending, and

Rom. 10. 15.

5. Lastly the particular *Action*, which our Saviour saw them a doing, was *casting a Net into the Sea*; which, whether it were, to let it down for a draught, or, as a learned Interpreter gathers from that which he takes to be a Parallel place to this *Luke*, 5. 2. it were only to wash it, it being on the Shoar-side; they were in their Calling.

And it is a remarkable *Observation*, that those, whom *Christ* called to be his *Disciples*, he took at their *Employment*.

A happy thing to be well employed, that neither Grace nor Temptation may find us idle. For Idleness gives *Temptation*, an easy admittance, and lays in the way of *Grace* as great a Discouragement.

Luk. 19 17.  
Tim. 3. 13.

It is honest *Industry*, that is usually rewarded with larger *Trusts*; and to him that is diligent and *faithful in a little*, more shall be given. Thus he that executes the Office of a *Deacon*, well, purchases to himself a good Degree, makes himself a fair step to a higher Preferment: and in Proportion these two painful well-meaning brethren commence *Apostles*, and from *Fishermen* are advanced to be *Fishers of men*.

To state the case aright. Not onely *Christians*, but all men whatever, have a double calling, general and particular. Our general calling



ing is, as *Men* to act and demean our selves according to *natural* and *moral* obligation; and, as *Christians*, according to *Gospel*-rules and duties of *Religion*. Every mans *particular Calling* is that, to which he stands particularly ingaged by his *Quality* and *Birth*, or by his *Condition* of life, or by his voluntary *Undertaking*.

Now the Duties of a mans *general Calling* may and must run thorough all the Instances of that *particular State*, which God hath called him to. Wherefore in all *Professions*, in all *Employments*, *Vir bonus*, an *Honest* man ought to come into the Definition. So then when a man thus Orders himself, to be in the general an honest good man, a man truly religious, he is generally in some good measure well qualified for any particular state of life God shall call him to.

And thus was it with these *Fishermen*; they had simplicity, honesty, industry; qualities, that fitted them so far for the Service of the Gospel. And though now in an ordinary regular course, there are peculiar *Capacities*, *Preparations* and *Qualifications* required to the *Ministry*, which are not to be attain'd but by long Study, serious Meditations and some experimented Skill in the divine Science of converting Sinners and saving Souls; yet these were abundantly supplied to them by the teachings of a gracious *Master* and the Infusions of the blessed *Spirit*, which raised them to extraordinary *Abilities*,

O may I and every one of you, whatever our *particular Callings* may be, so mind our *general Calling*, as we are *Men*, as we are *Christians* in the obligations of *Morality* and *Religion*; that when our Lord comes to look upon us, as he did here upon these two *Brethren*, we may be, if not dignified by him, as, they were; yet accepted of him, being found so doing.

Matt. 24. 46.

We should now proceed to Christs *Call* and their *Obedience*, the two remaining parts.

The *Call* has in it a *Command* and a *Promise*.

The *Command* is, *Follow me*, where we are to explain what it is to follow *Christ*; to attend upon him, to learn of him, to imitate him; and particularly, as *Ministers*, to preach the Truth and to suffer, to dye in Testimony of it, as he did, if God call us thereunto.

The *Promise* in these words; *I will make you Fishers of men*; where we are to shew the Analogy and Proportion between *Fishing* and *Preaching*: to wit, in a patient Attendance, in a prudent Application, in Hazards and Toils, and lastly in tedious and wearisome Disappointments.

III. Their *Obedience* is exprest, that upon his *Call* they followed him; where also there is;

The *Readiness* of it; they did it *Straitway*,

And their *Self-resignation*; they left their *Nets*, their former course of Life and worldly Interests.

But I should too much trespass upon your Patience, should I ingage any further.

May

*May Almighty God, who gave such Grace unto St Andrew and the rest of his holy Apostles, that they readily obeyed the Calling of his Son Jesus Christ, and followed him without delay; grant unto us all, that we being call'd by his holy Word, may forthwith give up our selves obediently to fulfil his holy Commandments, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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# A Sermon upon GUN-POWDER TREASON.

Preached before the KING at Whitehall,

November the 5<sup>th</sup> 1675.

## Rom. XIII.

*Let every soul be subject unto the Higher powers.*



He History of the *Day* is so well known to every body, and stands avow'd upon such authentick Records, that 'twere needless to produce Arguments, to confirm the Truth of it. I shall rather refer you to two Witnesses beyond all exception; *one* our worthy Country-man, Mr. *Camden*, a man of great Learning and Judgment, and of equal *Candour*; the *other*, a great Man of *France*, and an excellent Historian, *Monsieur de Thom*, who both of them have told the story at large, with just and becoming, that is, with horrible Resentments.

Far be it from us, that we should mock Heaven with our Thanks! which we do, if our *Anniversary* be but a Trick of State, and our *feu de joy* but false fire. God forbid, I say, that we should shew our selves so ridiculously Uncharitable, as to take advantage from our own Hypocrisy, in a dissembling Gratitude to God, onely to draw an *odium* upon our Adversaries!

However, I shall not pursue the Advantages of the *Day* against them, so as to rip up the circumstances of that horrid Contrivance, to aggravate the dismal Consequences of it, had the fatal Blow been given, and in a declamatory way to lay load upon the whole *Romish* Party and Perswasion, for that which perhaps, (bating the Assistance and Incouragement of the *Priests*, who are never wanting upon such occasions) might be the Result onely of some desperate hot-headed Male-contents of that *Faction* I must now, *Religion* I cannot call it.

*Religion*, alas! has nothing to do in Designs of this black nature. Religion, as St *James* has describ'd her, is made up of *purity* and *peace*; and sure there's nothing of one or t'other in cruel Treacheries, in bloody Massacres and Tragical murders. I dare appeal to any one, let him be of what Religion he will, if he have any true sense of Religion in him, whether he do not utterly from his heart detest and abhor such Practices.

Wherefore my present Task will be, (leaving the *Hypothesis*) to apply my self to the *Thesis*, and in all honest plainness to lay down the doctrine of *Loyalty*; as St *Paul* has in the *Epistle* of the day, delivered



it to us; that every one should submit himself, and yeild an Obedience, and pay a subjection to those lawful Powers and Authorities, which God has set over him. And if in the vindication and clearing of that Doctrine, I do any where (as they may come in my way) touch at those treasonable and pernicious Principles, by which men, of whatsoever Religion they may be, have endeavour'd to render all Government and Governours insecure; I hope I shall not offend any truly Pious and Loyal breast

In the Words we have these things to consider.

1. The Nature of the *Duty* here recommended to us; *Subjection* or *Obedience*.
2. The Ground of it; *power*, that is, Lawful authority, together with a special Direction of our Duty to the supreme Magistrate; the *higher Powers*.
3. The Universal and Conscientious Obligation of it; that *every soul* be subject. *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers.*

Of which that I may speak to God's Glory and our own Benefit;

**L**et us humbly address our prayers to Almighty God the great Governour of the World, and Orderer of Societies; the Manager of all Events, and the Discoverer of Secrets; that he would be graciously pleased to infuse into the Minds of men such principles of Obedience to all lawful Authorities over them, that under them we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.

That he will take especial care of his holy Catholick Church, that all the members of the mystical body of his Son may be govern'd and guided by the same spirit of Truth and Peace.

That he will be gracious and favourable to our Sion, that all that love her may prosper, and that all weapons and designs form'd against her may miscarry and come to nought, as it was this Day, Praised be his Name.

That he will pour out the choicest of his Gifts and Graces upon the Head and Heart of his chosen Servant and our Dread Soverain Charles, by his Grace &c. That He will preserve His Person against all Attempts whether of forrein or domestick Foes. That he will establish His Throne in Righteousness, Honour and Peace. That he will direct all his Counsels with his Heavenly Wisdom.

That he will give Him good success in all His Undertakings to the Glory of his own Name, the Honour of our Soverain, the Benefit of his Church, and the Welfare of the People.

That he will bless Him in all his Affairs and Concerns with wise and faithful Councillors, with diligent and righteous Officers, with prudent and active Magistrates, with a loyal and publick-spirited Nobility, with a vertuous and courageous Gentry, with a peaceable and well-minded Comonalty, and above all, with a pious, learned, and industrious Clergy.

And to this end, that he will bestow a double portion of his Spirit upon the Tribe of Levi, Arch-bishops, Bishops, Priests and Deacons; and for a supply of their Mortality that he will bless the two Universities of this Land.

Lastly that he will be Present amongst us, who are at this time assembled in his name and fear, to hear and to handle his holy Word; and that he will assist Me his unworthy Servant, and You his beloved People, that I may so speak, and you so hear, that his Name may be glorified, and our Souls edified.

To these our humble Requests let us subjoyne our hearty Thanks for all the Vouchsafements and Indearments of his Love.

For

For our Health, Strength, Liberty, Peace, Plenty and all other Advantages he has given us to serve him and to save our selves withall.

For all his Favours and loving Kindnesses, wherewith he hath obliged us from our Youth.

For all his Mercies, both Personal and National; particularly for those Two never to be forgotten, his miraculous Preservation of us from the Popish Conspiracy, by a strange and timely Discovery, and his gracious Deliverance of us from under the Fanatick Usurpation, by the seasonable Restitution of our King and Church, of our Laws and Religion.

Above all, let our souls bless him for their Redemption wrought and accomplished by his Christ our Jesus in our nature for us.

For all the illustrious Instances of that stupendous Work.

For the Merits and Benefits and Examples of what he has done and suffered for us.

For his Word and Sacraments.

For the means of Grace and Hopes of Glory.

And lastly for those great and good Examples of his Saints and Servants that have gone before us in our Christian course; beseeching him to grant us his Grace, that we may walk worthy of all these his Mercies, and may so follow these good Examples in all Piety, Charity, Humility, Patience, and the Practice of all Christian Vertues; that we at the last together with them be made Partakers of everlasting Life.

These and all other our Desires and Acknowledgments let us tender unto him in the Name and Words of his well beloved Son, as Himself hath taught us to pray. Our Father which art in Heaven; &c.

Let every soul be subject unto the higher Powers.

From the Words we propos'd these three things:

1. The Duty; Subjection.
2. The Ground of it; Power.
3. The Obligation of it; Every soul.

1. The Duty; to be subject, which is a Military Term, taken from the Tackticks and Discipline of War, from the Marshalling of Companies and postures of Soldiers, that every man keep his Rank and File and obey Orders. In the Original there's a handsom Allusion by a frequent Repetition of the Word; which is unimitable in any other Language. Forgive me two or three Greek words; since without them I cannot well make it out. The powers that be, are ordain'd by God *Τεταγμεναι*, that is, put into the Upper place, wherein they appear (as it were) by a Divine Commission of Array; and He that resists, resists *ἀνταρταζον Θεῷ*, the ordinance of God, that is, he disobeyes Martial order, breaks his Rank, and disturbs the divine Methods, which Almighty God would have societies regulated by. So to be subject is *ὑποτάσσεσθαι*, to keep in that order, that every one be mindful of that Station, wherein God has placed him, and submit himself to his superiour Officers; and to resist is *ἀνταρτασσεσθαι* to oppose himself (as it were) in Battle-array against God the great Orderer of Societies.

There are then different Ranks and Degrees of men; Some are over, to Govern; the rest under, to be subject. Neither God, no nor the Devil himself is for Anarchy and Confusion, or for a leveling Parity. There are distinct orders of good Spirits, and so of the Evil ones too. No Community can be maintain'd otherwise.

And indeed 'twas for the Ease and Security and Benefit of Mankind, that the Generality should obey. Subjection is our Interest as well as

Duty; For society cannot be managed without *Laws* and *Rules* how every one is to act in his Place, and these *Laws* must have some *Guardians*, that may see them put in due Execution. These, that have this Oversight, are the Magistrates, and they too in subordination to one another, as having a *Supreme*, from whom they derive, and to whom they must account; The Body and groſs of the society then are the ἀρχόμενοι, the persons to be subject and to be govern'd

Now the Duties wherein this *subjection* consists, are such as these. To Revere the Magistrates Person as sacred and inviolable; to Obey his Commands in all things *lawful*; and such are all, that are not expressly forbidden by God himself; nay, in things absolutely *unlawful*, should it so happen, by no means to resist, but cheerfully to suffer, and so to obey passively, where we cannot actively, as knowing that it will be the greater commendation of our Obedience, when for conscience toward God we endure grief, suffering wrongfully, and that to obey with such disadvantage will be the way to accumulate our eternal Rewards: and in things *doubtful*, humbly to submit our own private Judgment to publick Authority; seeing that if there should be an Error in our Obedience, it would be an error on the right hand; whereas, should a man commit a mistake in his Disobedience, he would incur a double Fault. Further, upon all occasions, to assist him and stand by him, as our Loyal Parliament uses to express it, *with our lives and fortunes*; and in the last place, which the poorest and meanest of his Subjects can do, with prostrate Devotions to pray for his Health and Happiness, in whose well-doing the Welfare of the Community is included.

And this *subjection* we owe upon account of that just Power, He hath over us, which is our next general Head,

II. *To the powers.* That's the Ground of our subjection, that which gives the Superiour a right of challenging our Obedience. Power here is not δύναμις, a meer boistrous brutish *Natural Power*, by which a man can do any thing either by bodily strength or other outward Advantages by Force, or Cunning, or any other irregular way of an Interest acquired any how; but ἐξουσία, a *Moral* legal righteous power, by which the Magistrate acts as God's Lieutenant, commission'd by him, and invested with a lawful Authority; a power derived from God, and instituted by him, as the *Apostle* himself has here describ'd it. For (says he) *there's no power but from God*, that is, no lawful power, for power got into a mans hands by unlawful means, is not from God any otherwise then all sin is; that is, onely by his Permission; and thus Devils and Wicked men have power to do mischeifs in the world, to persecute and oppress the Church, and to vex and disturb the peace and quiet of Mankind. 'Tis God alone is, as the Original and Fountain, so the Founder and Appointer of all just power, and wherever we find it thus placed, we are to look upon it as a Ray of Divinity. So he goes on; *The powers that be, are ordain'd of God.* The powers, that be; not Whatever they be, right or wrong, as some would have it; but real rightful powers, that are rightly established and constituted. It must be such a power then, to make a right basis of Government and ground of Obedience, as is deriv'd from God, and appointed by him.

It is not enough, that a Man by an unwarrantable Ambition and the success of wicked Attempts, has put himself into the seat of Sovereignty, (which the *Psalmist* in that case calls the Throne of *iniquity*, or as we read *the stool of wickedness*) and Usurps the place of power, to give him

1 Pet. 2. 19.

Psal. 94 20.



a right to that place, and to make either his Usurpation or our Obedience lawful.

Hence appears the falshood of *two* dangerous Positions, which have been maintain'd in our days.

*One* is, that common Providence is alone sufficient to Intitle any one to Rule or government, and that any Subject may justifie his Compliance with Illegal powers from being sinful, upon this ground, that those powers have bin succesful; nay, that we ought in duty and conscience to be subject to those that are got into the Place, by whatever unlawful means they came there. For on the contrary, these Usurpers and Intruders are such, as, in the Apostles account, *resist God's Ordinance*, and to whom *Wrath* is due in this world, and *damnation* in the next; and for us to comply with such, were to make our selves Complices in their Rebellion, in which case every Accessory becomes a Principal. This is such Doctrine as I am sure this *Apostle* would never have own'd.

A *second* is, that the Want of power in a lawful Sovereign absolves people from that Obedience, they owe him; in that, say they, *subjection* and *protection* are Correlative terms; wherefore, as they conclude, when the Magistrate fails of his duty, be it from what cause it will, to *protect*; the subjects are discharg'd from their duties also, and are no longer bound to *Obey*. This is a traiterous Opinion, which undermines the very foundation of this Christian Duty, upon which the Apostle has laid so great a stress. For at this pass, if any subjects grow weary of their Governour, 'tis but their deserting him, and straight they are disoblig'd any longer from obeying him; because they have either voluntarily assisted another to get into the place, or at least God for the sins of the people has suffered the Scepter to be rung out of the right owners hands. But supposing that by this or any other way the Magistrates power be weakned so far, that he cannot afford protection to his subjects, or so much as provide security for him self, yet we must know, that his *authority* remains still good, and 'tis that which obliges the conscience of subjects; and we are bound the rather, in this case of his Detriment and Disability, to assist him the more in all we may, towards the recovery of his just power again. As in Paternal relation Children are oblig'd the more to honour and support their Parents, in the decays of Age and breaches of their Fortunes; so that when the Parent is disabled from discharging his duty, the Child's duty is improv'd. And thus it is, or ought to be, betwixt Prince and Subjects.

Further, the *Powers*, to which Subjection is due, are not Airy Notions, or things, in the *Abstract*, lying in common, as a Prize for every body that can catch them; but are just Rights lodg'd in particular Persons, to whom the Execution of those Powers peculiarly of right belong. And these *Persons* are the Object of our Obedience, as that just *Power* is the Ground of it.

I have heard; there is a Maxim in our *Common Law*, that the Crown once obtain'd supplies all defects, and maketh all things done by any one under that Title, valid and sacred. But this, as I suppose it, was intended only as an Expedient for those unsetled times, whilst the dispute lasted betwixt the two Royal Houses, which equally pretended to the Crown, and did as succes favour'd them, by turns get into the Throne; that, through the unconstancy of succes, the Interests of Government and Procedure of publick Justice, might not be always at uncertainty; so, God forbid that ever prosperous Rebellion should shroud it self under that sacred

sacred Character, and invade those Priviledges, which are of right appropriated to Royalty alone.

Again, which is the particular Direction of our Obedience, we are to take notice of a Gradation in these Powers. 'Tis here *potestatibus supereminentibus*, to the higher, that is, to the supreme powers; or as the Syriack well renders it, *to the powers of Majesty*, which as they receive their Commission immediately from God's hand, so they derive and hand down power to all inferiour and subordinate Magistrates; that is, as St Peter has exprest it, *to the King as Supreme*, and then *to those that are sent and deputed by him*. For indeed that Obedience, we owe to inferiour Magistrates, resolves it self into that obligation of duty, we stand in to the King himself, as *Supreme*, whom they represent, and in whose name they act; as that Duty, we owe to the King, resolves it self into that obligation of Conscience, we stand in to God himself, whose Minister and Vicegerent he is. So that as his Ministers are accountable to him, so is he himself to God, and to God alone; Exempt from all other Cognisance and Jurisdiction. Otherwise to make the *Supreme* lyable to any earthly power, were to set up an Authority over him, and consequently to make him a subject, to whom our subjection is due; which is a down right contradiction in terms. Upon any pretence then to question and controll *supremacy*, to give check to Majesty, is little less than a Violation of Deity it self. Hereupon the Royal Prophet, even where he bewails his sin and declares his Repentance, though he had in a high manner injur'd his Neighbour too, yet avows his Authority to God himself, from whom he received it; *Against thee, thee only have I sinned*; asserting at once his freedom from the Bar of human Justice, and humbly acknowledging his submission to the Divine Tribunal.

And this Consideration, that they are thus Accountable, should be a mighty Argument to those in Highest place; besides that other, that in their Carriage they ought to resemble and imitate him, whom in their Place they represent. *Parum libere debet, cui multum licet*, was well said. Those, who are of an unbounded Power, ought to set limits and bounds to their Will at least. And thus does God himself; who, as he does whatsoever he pleases, so he is not pleased to do all, whatsoever he can; but in the manage of worldly and human Affairs, even when upon extraordinary occasions he acts by special Commission, and, as I may say, upon his Prerogative, yet follows the ordinary known rules of strictest Justice, and will be sure to justify himself, when he judges, let his judgments be never so severe and surprising.

And thus when *Sovereigns* act, they do like the *Sun*, the great Minister of state in the government of the greater World, who though he move in a superiour Orb, yet keeps an orderly round in his survey of lower Nature; and as with his Circuit he encompasses all things below him, so is himself circumscrib'd and confin'd in a regular walk.

Not to say that the present Interest of preserving *power* will, if consider'd, be of force sufficient for the using of it well. For *power* or *authority* is that in the Politick body, which *reason* is in Man. When a man does not govern himself by Reason, when he gives himself up to the sway of his Passions and Lust, we say such an one is a weak man; The *Latins* exprest it properly, *impotenter amare, irasci*, &c. to let the reins loose to his Affections, so as not to have the command of himself. Thus *power* being founded in Laws and Publick reason; to depart from them

them is, to weaken Authority, and to give an evil advantage to disloyal minds to shake off that subjection, which every person whatever does upon the obligation of Conscience owe to the Higher powers. Which is our *third* and last stage, the Universal and Conscientious Obligation of the Duty.

III. *Every soul.* There's the Universality of the Obligation, that all, whatever they are, of what quality soever, must submit to those lawful powers, that are set over them, and those not to be govern'd by meer Force, That's for *wrath*: but by ties upon Conscience, of which the Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy* are the Gages; This for *conscience's sake*. It is not ones being a *great man*, nor anothers being a *Church-man*, nor a thirds pretending to be a *Holy* and a *Good man* will excuse him from this subjection. *Greatness* has Priviledges belonging to it, but still within the Compass of the Law, and still so as to hold *in capite* from the supreme, who is the Fountain both of Honour and of Justice. As to the *Church*, that ought to be no Sanctuary to the disloyal, and *Joab* may be pull'd from the horns of the Altar. 'Tis an unjustifiable Incroachment of the *Romish Church*, to exempt her Clergy from secular Judicature; a thing no where taught or countenanced in Holy Scripture.

1 Kin. 2. 28.

But there are others, who would seem to stand at the most unreconcilable distance from *Rome*, yet imbrace all her Doctrines, which have bin delivered by the worst of those Writers concerning Civil power. It cannot, I think, be denied, but that *Parau*, *Buchanan*, and other *Antimonarchists*, and *Holy commonwealths men* have said as much, and as desperately too, in the prejudice of Soverains rights, as ever *Mariana*, *Parsons*, or any others of that Tribe have done. And it cannot be forgotten, how some amongst our selves, who thought themselves far enough from *Rome*, were suffered by a just God to put in Practice, what the others by a merciful God were permitted but to Design, and have to the eternal shame of the Religion, they profess, inserted into the English-Calendar as black and gloomy a day in some circumstances worse than *This* was intended to have bin. But God be thanked, who as he did early prevent the *Conspiracy* of the one, so did at last seasonably break and defeat the *Usurpation* of the other. But we have not so learnt *Christ*, nor ought we to make our Profession a *cloak of maliciousness*, or cover for our disobedience, nor doth true Piety give the least countenance to Faction and Sedition, but rather adds more and greater weight to our civil obligations. *Christ* never intended his Religion for a *Boutifou*, to disturb human societies and to set people together by the ears; and where he says, he *came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword*; Mat. 10. 34. he means those Persecutions and Afflictions, which his followers were to meet with in the world, who in all such Tragical instances were constantly to have the suffering part. And this upon Conscience. Whence 'tis said, *Every soul*.

1 Pet. 2. 16.

Every *soul*, as well as every body, is to be subject. This is an usual *Synecdoche*, by the noble part of Man to understand the whole person. But that was not all here. There was great reason, the *soul* should be brought in; This being a duty, upon the performance of which no less than our souls lye at stake, and the neglect whereof will procure damnation. The Yoke then is laid upon the neck of Conscience. 'Tis not onely the Outward-man, stands obliged,

'Tis



1 Pet. 2. 13.  
Roms 13. 5.

'Tis true the Magistrates power can reach no further, either in his Laws or Penalties, then the Outward-man, and the Conscience is peculiarly reserv'd for God's own Cognizance; but then the Conscience is likewise engag'd and lyable to God, even upon the account of civil Obedience; for we must obey *for the Lord's sake* (saies St Peter) and *for conscience sake*, saies St Paul. So that he, who disobeyes, is to be punished by the Magistrate in the Outward-man, and delivered up to God for the Soul.

That natural Freedom then, wherewith the Soul or Mind of man is indued, so that 'tis in a manner unlimited, and cannot be inspected or restrained by human Power or Laws, does not exempt it from the obligation of Obedience, even to those laws, which of themselves cannot reach it; or make disobedience ere a whit the less sin before God, who is Lord of Conscience, whose ordinance human authority is, and to be obeyed both for His and for Conscience sake. The Laws of men, I say, do not of themselves immediately oblige Conscience; but they do so *Virtute præcepti divini*, by vertue of God's command, which has order'd our obedience; and by consequence do lay an Obligation upon subjects Conscience, insomuch that disobedience is a damning Sin.

From this, that has been said, may be made good the *lawfulness*, or indeed the *necessity* of imposing and taking *Oaths*, whereby we oblige or rather declare our fidelity and obedience to the Magistrate; because we are bound in Conscience already, whether we swear or no, and our swearing is but an acknowledgment of that Obligation, which lyes already upon Conscience.

From this conscientious Obligation it is, that the Duty of subjection and Obedience is deliver'd to us *per modum præcepti*, in a peremptory form of speech as an Apostolical Canon; *Let every soul be subject*. He does not say, *I beseech you, I exhort you brethren, be ye subject*: but he uses a way of command, *Let every soul be subject*; And well he might, the Matter bears it, and requires it. 'Tis Obedience to Authority he recommends, and therefore he was to do it with authority. It is not, I say, set down by way of Advice, as a thing Indifferent and at our own choice, which we may do or not do. Alas! if it were so, in what a precarious condition would Governours be, if they lay thus at mercy, if people were free, either as Men or Christians, to shake off the yoke when they pleased; and pretended Greivances, civil or religious, might justify Disloyal Attempts? and in what a perpetual tosse and inquietude must all Societies needs be, if Obedience and Subjection stood upon no other terms, but the courtesie of inferiours?

It is not then left to the *good nature* of the Subjects themselves, whether they will obey or no, but 'tis charg'd directly upon their *Consciences*. Nor is it laid down only as an Expedient of Peace, and the Security of our temporal Concerns, upon meer prudential considerations as the safest course, that we should be subject: but 'tis absolutely and positively prescribed, as a Duty, of necessity to be perform'd, and strictly to be observ'd by all, who would live up to the purposes of their Christian profession, and expect the comforts of it in the other world, and labour after the rewards of that Obedience, which they pay to God himself. For 'tis not only the avoiding of that *wrath*, which the Magistrate does by his power, inflict upon the transgressors of his Laws, upon which this Precept is grounded; but also *conscience* to God, as it is ver. 5. who will punish such undutiful misdemeanors with eternal death, as offences against Divine Law, by which those human Powers have bin establish'd and ordain'd in the world.

So

So that the Rebellious and Disloyal, the Seditious and Disobedient are in the same Predicament, as Theeves and Murtherers are, lyable to a double Sentence, pleadable at a twofold Bar, to be punished here for the breach of Mans laws, and hereafter for Gods: The Murtherer is *hanged* for his Crime by the Laws of the Land, and without Repentance *damn'd* too by the Law of God. And this and no better, nay rather much worse (because offenders, as I take it, against a higher Precept) is the condition of Rebels, and in proportion, of all that disobey the just government over them; that they Sin not only against the Law of their Countrey, and so fall under a deserved Wrath in their Temporal estate, their lives and fortunes; but against the Law of God too, which obliges them to obey their lawful Magistrate in conscience to God himself, and so renders them accountable at his Tribunal also, to the manifest hazard of their Eternal state.

To draw to a Conclusion; There is no one Duty more prest in the writings of the *New Testament*, then Obedience to Government; to shew that Christianity was not to destroy Civil rights, but rather to secure and establish them: And this they were the more earnest in, because there were a sort of Men early, that made that wicked advantage of the Gospel, as to pretend their *Christian liberty* set them free from all obligation to Civil powers, and so brought a disrepute upon the Gospel as a licentious doctrine. Our *Saviour* himself in his own person paid Tribute, and resolves the case, *Give unto Caesar the things which are Caesars, and unto God the things which are Gods*. Implying that as on the one hand we are so to obey *Caesar*, as not to sin against God; so on the other, that a pretended piety to God is not to infringe the rights of our Governour, nor to supersede our civil obedience.

Matt. 17. 24.  
Matt. 22. 21.

What will Those, who take upon themselves the Name and Order of the holy *Jesus* say to this? who walk and talk so thwart to his holy doctrine and blessed example; what can Those, who pretend so much to Purity, say to this, whose purposes are so diametrically opposite to the purity and principles of the Gospel? Christian faith is not to be *Propagated*, nor Religion to be Reformed, by resisting of Authority, by deposing of Kings and subversion of Governments, by Murders, Rapins and such like Violences.

There's much talk of *Pauls* Sword and *Peters* Keys. Neither of them but would have detested such kind of doctrine. Indeed it was *Peters* sword, that cut off the high Priests servants ear, and he was chid for that too; but sure neither his nor *St Pauls* sword was ever intended to lop off Sovereigns heads.

Joh. 18. 16.

Mind what *St Paul* saies in all his practical discourses; Peruse this 13th Chapter to the *Romans*, the very Abstract of Christian Politicks. See what he writes to *Timothy* 1. Ep. 6th Chap. of Servants, who are only held most part by personal Contract; whereas our duty we owe to the Magistrate, is engag'd by closer Ties and higher Obligations.

And that these and the like places were none of those *δυσνόητα*, passages of difficult and doubtful understanding, which *St Peter* takes notice of; he himself goes hand in hand with his brother *Paul* in this doctrine: *Fear God, honour the King*, saies he, intimating that our honour of the one is grounded upon our fear of the other. And a little before he had said, *Submit your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether it be to the King as Supreme, or unto governours, as unto those that are sent by him*; where though he calls it *ἐξ ἡμετέρου*, a human creation,

1 Pet. 2. 17.

or as we render it, *an ordinance of man*, as here the other Apostle does, *an ordinance of God* (and so it may be both in a different respect; As they are *Gods* in their Office, so they are Men still in their Nature) yet he presses the Duty upon conscience, *for the Lords sake*.

2 Pet. 2, 10.

And hereupon, in his 2 *Epistle* he taxes those teachers, who made that unlawful use of their pretended Liberty by *Christ*, as to discharge and absolve subjects from their Obedience, such as *despised government*, as if their being *Christians* excused them from owning any Authority of *State* or *Church* over them, and as if now they were to have no Master, no King but *Jesus*; and says of such, that they are *presumptuous* arrogant men, *self will'd*, and perverse, *that are not afraid to speak evil of dignities* too, that is, of those Orders and Offices, *Christ* has appointed in his Church, of which he made the Apostles and their successors the Overseers. Far be it that such men should pass under the Character of the *Godly*, and the best of Christians, the standards of Primitive zeal and Evangelical purity, who have laid so great a blemish upon Christian religion, that they do not at all deserve the name of *Honest men*.

Jude, 11.

And thanks be to God, who has in several Instances, by his gracious Providence, defeated the wicked Counsels of the One and the Other, and disowned their ungodly Practices. And may he, in his good time, root out of the hearts and minds of all Christians such pernicious and Destructive Principles and Opinions, from whence such calamitous and dangerous Effects do naturally flow. And may he for ever blast the Designs and confound the Devices of all such, as harbour such desperate Tenets; and let all those, who lift up hand or heart against the Lords Anointed the lawful Authority over them, perish in the gainfaying of *Corah*, as sons of *Belial*, men of profligate conscience, and that give the highest disparagement to *Christian doctrine*, which upon all occasions sets it down expressly, as one of its most weighty and important Precepts, *to be subject to the higher powers*.

My time will not allow me to say all that might or should be said: What shall I say? In a word, let me have leave to say, that were I worthy to lay before Christian Princes a *policy*, that would secure their Crowns on their heads, and Scepters in their hands, and establish their Thrones under them (in defiance to our Enemies on one hand and the other, I must speak it,) the *English Church* is that, which besides the purity of her Doctrine, the decency of her Worship, her exact imitation of Antiquity, (so far as History can help us) her inoffensiveness to all but turbulent Spirits, Besides all these, I say, upon the pure score of Loyalty, the *Church of England* is that, I must in conscience recommend to them; it being impossible for any one that holds firm to this Church, ever to turn Rebel to his Prince.

May God preserve Her still amongst us, as the better Patern of *Reformation* in the World, until he present her blameless (as she is, both to God and his Vicegerent) at the appearance of our Lord Jesus. And may he, whose watchful Eye of Providence is always intent upon the safety and welfare of pious Princes, ever preserve our *Gracious Sovereign*, whom he has appointed to be the nursing Father of this his Church. May he ever mightily defend him, whom he has made the *Defender of our Faith*; and so settle his own Temple

and



and *David's* House, (which are both so founded upon the same holy hill of *Sion*, that they must stand or fall together) that they may never be moved. And may he so bless the Royal Family, that there may never be wanting one of that Sacred stock to sway the *Brittish* Scepter till *Shiloh* come. And may all the people that *fear God* and honour the *King*, that love their Religion and value their Loyalty, say *Amen, Amen.*

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Upon

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A Sermon upon the MARTYRDOM of King  
*CHARLES the First.*

Preached at St. Peters Westminster, Jan. 30. 1677.

St. Joh. XIX. 15.

*Shall I crucifie your King?*



Mat. 27.

1 Pet. 4. 13.

**I**T pleased God, out of his special favour to the *Royal Martyr*, whose ever-blessed Memory we This day celebrate, by an extraordinary Providence, so to over-rule the malice of his Adversaries, that they should pitch upon that very time for the horrid Murder of their Sovereign, that very Day of the Month, whereon, by the ordinary course of Reading, the History of our Saviours *Passion* was appointed by the Church for the *Second Lesson*. An Instance, no question, of great Light and Comfort, and of blessed Assurance to our Royal Sufferer; being thus put in mind, that he was, in this sad Conflict, to fight under *Christs* Banner, and to be a partaker of his Sufferings.

Wherefore I have made choice of one Passage of that *dolorous Story*, though taken out of another *Evangelist*; and that the Resentment of those Indignities may carry the greater Weight, and be the more Authentick, I have quoted the words, I now read to you, out of the Judges own mouth. *Pilate saith unto them, shall I crucifie your King.*

*Crucifie a King?* No Death was lookt upon as more Ignominious, none esteem'd more Painful, or judged more Accursed then that of the Cross; as being, amongst the *Romans*, the punishment of Slaves and notorious Malefactors. Again no *Condition*, in this life more Splendid and Glorious, more Potent and Awful, then that of *Kings*, whose bare Word in ancient times past for Law, and who at least, where Monarchy is most moderated and bounded, if they make not laws, have the executive part of them, and are intrusted with the Administration of affairs. Now that a *King* should submit his Crown to the *Cross*, and dye a servile death, should by his own Subjects be pursued with a Hue and Cry of pretended Justice, and hurried to the place of Execution, is the wonder of this both *Text* and *Day*.

*Shall I crucifie your King?* *Pilate* speaks it of *Christ*; but we may fairly, in proportion, apply it to the *Lord's Anointed*, who, as he did this day share in the sufferings of his blessed Saviour, must be allow'd to partake in the glories of his *Cross* too; upon which *Christ* has put that Dignity, that he has made it the very Cognisance of his Religion, and the Character

Character of Discipleship. *If any man will come after me, says he, let him take up his Cross, and follow me.* Mat. 16. 24.

And this hard Lesson not to be practised by the meaner sort of Christians onely, to make Poverty their Choice, and suffering their Glory; but even the greatest Proficients and highest Scholars are to take out their crucified Masters example, in a frank and generous submission to the greatest Indignities and Hardships, which can be put upon them by an Injurious World for Christ's sake.

Hereupon it was, that, ever since *Constantines* time, the most eminent Princes and Potentates, the most renown'd Kings and Monarchs, after they gave their Names to *Christ* once, have made the *Cross* their chiefest Impress, and with it adorn'd all their Blazonry, and set it up on the top of their Imperial Crown; as the Complement of their Royalty, and the Standard of their Confidence. By this those heroick active Champions of Christianity in former Ages proved Victorious, for the subduing of Heathenism and Heresies, as well as Kingdoms; and by this, suffering Princes, such as our *Edward the Confessor*, and beyond all Instances of this kind, our late *Martyr'd Sovereign*, were more then Conquerors, having fought a good fight, and exchanging a corruptible for a never-fading Crown of Glory. Rom. 8. 37.

First I shall open the Words, as the Occasion of the *Text* directs them; and then apply them to the Business of this Day.

*Pilate* did certainly endeavor, what he could to take off *Christ's* malicious Prosecutors; though all would not do, but he was at last born down with their Importunity to a base Compliance: he first presented him as an object of pity, to take off the edge of their malice, *Behold the Man*, vers. 5. declaims with all his Innocence, that *he found no fault in him*; and now to turn their Envy into veneration, as a King, *Behold your King*, vers. 14. but they straight in this verse, sling off this with great Disdain and Violence, *Away with him, Crucifie him*. To which he here replies, *Shall I crucifie your King?* They answer this with a startling word to the Governor himself; *We own no King but Caesar?* whereupon he delivered him to be crucified, vers. 16. And although they urg'd their own laws for it, and he wash'd his Hands of it, yet the water came foul off from his fingers; inasmuch as the *Cross*, being a Capital punishment used among the *Romans*, not among the *Jews*, (with whom a Blasphemer was to be ston'd to death) his being *Crucified* shewed, that he suffer'd, ἐπὶ τοῦ Πιλάτου, under *Pontius Pilate*, that is, not only in the time of his Government, but in his Authority and Sentence also.

However *Pilates* Argument is good, and his Defence of an injured Prince against his implacable Countrymen very reasonable; that he was their *King*, and therefore ought not (whatever they pretended out of their own Law) to be *Crucified*. We shall dilate this Argument a little and briefly clear the Defence.

First, that *Christ* was *King of the Jews*, not only in a Mock-title, but by real Interest, as Birth could give him; appears from his Enemies own confession, who upon *Herod's* inquiry, after the Wise men had given the Alarm to the Town, acknowledg'd the *Messias* they expected should be born *King* of that Nation, and that at *Bethlehem*, a Royal City; and this according to the prediction of their Prophets, that *David's* Tabernacle should be set up again by the coming of the *Messias*, who was to be so lineally



Joh. 6. 15.

lineally descended from him, and to set upon his Throne; which last, though not answered in an outward Pomp of secular Grandeur, yet was abundantly fulfilled in a spiritual and a more glorious Importance; And the very People at one time were so perfectly convinced of his undoubted Right to Rule, upon the account of his being the *Messias*, in whom those Predictions had their full completion; that they would actually have set the Crown upon his head, and proclaimed him *King*, and wondred at his declining the Title.

Joh. 19. 22.

And that *Pilate* himself, though no *Jew*, was really of this persuasion, and did *bonâ fide & vero vultu*, in very good earnest, plead this Argument in *Christ's* behalf, the very Title of the *Cross* evinceth; which he not only ordered to be set over his Head, but indited with his own Hand, (and that hand guided by the secret instinct and direction of Gods Spirit) which therefore upon their Address he would not alter, resolving that what he had written should pass; *What I have written, I have written*; as if he should say, I have good Warrant for what I have done, nor shall I (to gratifie your spite) go against my own Conscience, your *King* I have called him, and he is your *King*.

2. And then in my *Next* place, being their *King*, that it was a Barbarous and Impious part in them, to seek and contrive his *Death* any way, whatever their *Laws* were; but most Improper, whatever his Misdemeanor was, to have him *Crucified* and die a *Roman-death*; he having, according to the Presidents own confession (who, as he was accountable to the *Roman-government*, was properly to be his Judge) done nothing which the *Roman State* could lay hold of, or the *Laws* of that People implead him guilty.

Gen. 49. 10.

Joh. 19. 7.

Thus stands the argument; *He is your King*. Will you be so Cruel, so Unnatural to murder your King? To this, though they could have been Cruel and Ill-natur'd enough to have done it Themselves, and have excused *Pilate*, yet they knew their Cruelty could not have been safe to Themselves; For now was the time, when the Scepter was departed from *Judah*, they had no *αἰσχρογούρα* left, no power to put any Capital sentence in Execution; such an action would have been ill resented at the Court of *Rome*, and lookt upon as an unjustifiable Riot. Why then do they urge a *Law of their own* against him, when they durst not, were disabled, to give Sentence according to that Law? No; what they durst not Themselves, they would put upon *Pilate*, who could Justifie what he did. His Authority, they thought, would make good the Murder, as their Malice would the Charge.

ver. 16.

But, says he, well! He is *your King*; Shall I crucifie *your King*? would you make me the Executioner of your Malice; and put the *Odiū* of your unjust Design upon the *Roman Power*? Can you in Honour and Honesty desire, your own Countryman, your native *King*, (one whose greatest infelicity is, that he is a *Jew*, was born amongst you; Were not this a greater, that he is the *King of the Jews*, was born your *King*) to be put to a foreign and a servile death, the punishment of a *Roman Slave*?

Yet see the Malice of his Adversaries and the Cowardise of his Judge, (affrighted into a Compliance with an enraged Multitude by the bare name of *Cæsar*) conspiring to put the *Lord of life* to Death, and to expose the *King of glory* to an open Shame. *And Pilate delivered him to be crucified.*

And this is the business of the *Text*, to which the Business of the *Day* runs Parallel; were it not that our blessed Martyr met with such a *President*

dent at his Tryal, as has no precedent in all Story, one so far transcending *Pilate* in all the ill qualities of an unjust Judge, that, instead of taking the Royal Prisoners part, pleading his Innocence and his Kingly Rights, and at last giving the Sentence (when extorted by fear) with Reluctancy and great Regrets, and washing his hands from the Blood of the Just man, as our *Pilate* here did; quite contrary, was all along contriving and abetting the horrid Murder, did with unimaginable Effrontery set home a ridiculous Charge, and with saucy Impertinencies interrupt the just Defences, a Gracious and Mild *Sovereign* was making for Himself and his People; and at last with a Venal Tongue, in a numerous Crowd of Subjects, talk down *Majesty* to Silence first, and then to Death.

I can hardly forbear, though 'tis not my time yet, to break out into Exclamations. O! unhappy Island of *Britain*, who wast one of the first Countries, that embracedst the Christian Faith! What was become of thy Christianity in those dismal days, when these things were acted? O dear *English*-men, honest Country-men! To what a pass was *English* Honesty then grown, when these things were suffered? Certainly Christianity and Honesty both were then fled the Country. *Pilate* himself, who sentenced the holy *Jesus*, shall rise up and condemn the men of that Generation.

As for that bold Wretch, who sitting in *Pilate's* place, did did so un-*Pilate*-like behave himself; nothing can be said by those, that think best of him, I mean those, that have got most by that days work, in his excuse, but this; that possibly he was tickled (beyond those temptations his cursed Hire might give) with the *Romantick* ambition of an extraordinary Villany, and fancied it, as he did, a great Commendation of his Name to Posterity, that he was (what I have heard one of that impious Crew designed for the Inscription of his own Grave-stone) *Judex Regis*, the Kings Judge, a Vile Wicked Judge of a Holy Glorious King. How much better did *Pilate* here demean himself (who yet cannot be acquitted for the Cowardly desertion of his own Convictions) not only with Indifference, but with some kind of Earnestness, seeking to avoid the Necessity of giving Sentence, and amongst other things pleading *Christs* Royalty here; Shall I, says he, crucify your King?

I shall not trouble you with *Historical* Narrations of the Case, but shall rather employ my time in gathering out something which may be partly for our *Instruction*, and partly (for which the Day is in a manner wholly design'd) for our *Humiliation*.

In the words, to apply them to our Case, we have two *Propositions*.

1. Shall I crucify your King? that is I must not, I ought not, you ought not to design it, a King must not be Crucified: for an Affirmative question must be taken to signify Negatively. This implies the First, that the Person of Kings is Sacred and Inviolable. This is the learned Bishop *Andrews* owns to be the Meaning of this Place. And this as to Matter of Right, for our *Instruction*, as I said.

2. From the Manner of speech and emphasis of the Interrogation. τὸν βασιλέα ὑμῶν σταυρώσω; Shall I crucify your King? that is, Can you find in your Hearts? Can you find in your Consciences, to have your King put to death? Dare you be so Cruel and Malicious? Dare you be so Impious and Wicked? And this implies the Second (which is a Corollary of the First) that 'Tis an Inhuman Barbarous and Unjustifiable thing to offer violence to ones King. And this as to the Matter of Fact, done as on this Day. This for our *Humiliation*.

1. First

I. First for the First, *That the person of a King is Sacred and Inviolable*. I shall prove it, both upon a *Natural* and *Moral* Account, and also from *Spiritual* and *Scriptural* Obligations; the *One* of which engages us as *men*, the *Other* as *Christians*, to give all Reverence ( besides the other Duties we owe him ) to our *Sovereign*, and to study and endeavor with all our might the preservation of his Person as well as his Authority: all Designs and Attempts, which tend to the taking away of his Life, being directly contrary to the Principles both of a *natural* and of an enlightened Conscience.

For *that* was a pernicious *Distinction*, which was so much cried up in the late *Rebellion*, and upon which the *Covenant*, the Ground of our Civil Wars, was bottomed, to put a difference betwixt the Kings *personal* and *politick* Capacity: when at the same time they profess a tenderness to his Safety, and yet ( which was a manifest Contradiction in fact ) levelled their Ordnances and aimed their Guns at Him, as if that their Duty bound them to destroy the *Man*, that they might preserve the *King*. For the Bullets could not have been taught this *Distinction*, nor could the *politick* Capacity of the King have made his Person shot-free.

A nice piece of *Machiavilian* Policy, and that which blasts and utterly defeats purposes of Government, and poisons the nature of Subjection, and maliciously obstructs those Intercourses of friendship, which ought to be between a Prince and his People; whereas every Subject, in his station, is both upon the score of Morality and Religion too, obliged to act both those Parts, for which *Alexander's* two Courtiers are severally commended, and to be not only *Philanax* a lover of the King, but *Philo Carolus* too, a lover of King *Charles*: I say, a lover of the Kings Person, as well as a friend to his Government.

Before I enter upon the *Arguments*; I shall premise, that, though it be not at all Necessary to our present Discourse, which *Form* of Government be simply and absolutely Best; yet Nature seems in a peculiar manner to favour *Monarchy*, and to give her suffrage for Kingship, by gathering all, as neer as may be, into Oneness; and in all sorts of sociable Creatures placing the Mastery likely in some one of the Herd; even in Those, which are the most exact model of a *Commonwealth*, subjecting the whole Community of the little Bumble bees to the King-Bee, whose presence keeps them all in order, and whose Miscarriage makes them all fall to pieces and break into Factions and Parties, *Rege amisso rupere fidem*, says he.

That *Verse* of the Poet, *ἐκ ἀγαθῶν πολυκοιρανίη, εἰς καὶ βλάπτει*. The Apostle *James* has made Scripture-*Prose*, of *my Brethren be not many Masters*.

However, let every form be Best, let them each pretend to serve best the ends of Society; yet We of these Nations have great cause to bless God, that our Government is, in the fundamental Constitution of it, so fairly tempered and almost equally mixed, being made of the *Three Estates*, ( of which the King makes not *One*, but is over all the *Three*, is Lord Paramount ) that the *Monarchy* has the Advantages of the other Two forms, *Aristocracy* and *Populacy*, joined with it, for the assistance of the Prince, and the satisfaction of the Subjects; who cannot complain, that the Government lies hard upon them, wherein they themselves have so ample a share, that neither *Laws* nor *Taxes*, ( which two things, are as the main Helps, so the chief Characters of all Governments ) are impos'd upon them without their own Consent, by their Representatives in *Parliament*.



ment. Wherefore we *Englishmen* much more (then any other People) are obliged in those Duties, we owe to our Sovereign; whether we consider our selves barely as *Man*, or beyond that as *Christians*.

And first as Men, upon a *moral* and *civil* account; and that in a *threefold* Respect, as the *King* may be lookt upon in a *triple* Relation.

1. As he is *Pater patriæ*, the Father of his Country.

2. As *Dei Vicarius*, God's Vicegerent; for that is a Title arrogantly usurped by the *Pope*, but really belongs to Kings.

3. As he is *Fons Justitiæ*, & *Custos Legum*, the Fountain of Justice and Conservator of the Law, and the Guardian of publick Peace and Order.

The *King* is the *Father of his Country*; Now if every Father, in a private Family, may challenge Honour of the whole Household as his due? how much more may the common Parent, in respect of whom the whole Community is but as one great Family? *Civilians* tell us, that all Government is founded in paternal Authority; the Father at first having had *Jus vite & necis*, power of life and death over his Children and Servants, to cut off and otherwise punish those that were rebellious and refractory to Discipline. And this seems to have been the inmost sense of Nature; that as she gives a Man leave to chop of any limb, that gangrenes and endangers the whole body, according to the *symbolical* Advice of our Saviour, taken in the *Literal* sense (as it may be) to pluck out an offending Eye, and to cut off an offending Hand or Foot; although every man be bound (as the *Apostle* words it) to cherish his own Flesh; so the Father of a family should have like power over all the persons under him, as being but parts of himself; to govern them, and to chastise them according to the nature of their offences. This, I say, was in all likelihood the method of Government at first.

Mar. 9. 43. 45.  
47.  
Eph. 5. 29.

But after, when the Families began to be multiplied, and so to combine into greater Societies, and to be gathered into Cities; in which case 'twas necessary for preservation of publick order, that every family should not be left to it self to its own rules and managery, in civil conversation abroad; but that all should submit to some common Laws to be govern'd by; then the care and trust of governing and inflicting punishments was devolved upon some one considerable Father, who thereupon became the *Patriark* or Head of the Families: that all that Reverence and Obedience, which was due to every Father in his single Family, might be paid to him by all the families, as to their common Father. And hence 'twas, that if there were any great disorder fell out in a private family, which was too hard for the Master of that family, he was to address himself to the Magistrate, to have justice done; as in the case of a rebellious Son.

Deut. 21. 18.

Now this devolution or Deputation was made, partly by Gods own appointment, the great Father of the Universe, from whom all paternity is derived and takes denomination; partly by the express or implied consent at least, if not the Choice, of the Families themselves, that were thus to be govern'd. The former the *Apostle Paul* tells us of, who affirms that all the powers, that are, are ordain'd of God. The latter the *Apostle Peter* intimates, when he calls the Governour, *ἀνθρωπίνης κτίσεως*, a humane creation; or as we render it, an ordinance of man; and that, says he, whether the *King* as supreme, or those that are sent by him.

Eph. 3. 15.

Rom. 13. 1.

1 Pet. 2. 13.

I know, there have been in all Ages and Countries boistrous men, Tyrants and Usurpers, that have broke into government by force, and got up into the Throne without either Gods commission, or the Peoples leave. We speak not of such, whose Title is not fair and legal; nor shall we define, what tract of time, or what consent of the peoples

may, when the right title is once extinct, confirm such unjust tenures, and give them a plenary right. We are now treating of those, who by an undoubted right are come to the place.

And that such owe their Power, not meerly, as a Trust of the Peoples, to popular Consent; but, besides that, and especially, to divine Institution; there is this undeniable irrefragable reason to prove it, and I have it from a good hand.

*No one can part with that to another, which he has no right to himself.*

*But the power over a mans own life no man, by the Law of God or Nature, has in himself.*

Lev. 19. 18.

For that divine Command, of doing no Murder, has respect to our own Person as well as to our Neighbour, since that due Love, we ought to have for our selves, is made the Square and Standard of that Charity, we must shew to others; and Nature obliges every man to study and endeavor his own Preservation.

Nor is this true only of every man singly considered; but of Communities of men also that they naturally have no such power over their own lives; since the Whole, being made up of its Parts, can have no more virtue or force in it, then what the several parts contributed to it. For if *Peter* and *John* and *Thomas*, and so the rest of mankind, have no legal power over their own lives, severally considered; 'tis plain, that all these men in the collection, put together, and jointly considered, cannot acquire that power.

Rom. 13. 4.

1 Pet. 2. 14.

And consequently 'tis manifest, that the People either individually, man by man, giving a Personal consent; or collectively, by their Representatives and Trustees, or otherwise, could not depute or transfer this power to the Magistrate. Wherefore it follows, that this power over mens lives, whereupon the life of Government and the execution of the Laws depend, must needs be deriv'd to the King from God himself; whose Minister the Apostle calls him, *not bearing the sword in vain*; and from the King delegated to Judges and other Officers, whom he thinks fit to intrust. In fine then, the Kings Authority, by which he is Father of the Countrey, is not precarious or obnoxious to the People, but is grounded upon divine Right.

Now to be a Parricide, or the Murderer of ones natural Parent, is a crime of that horrid nature, and that strange resentment; that a great Lawgiver, being ask'd, why he had in his laws set no punishment upon that misdemeanor, answered, that he believed better of mankind, then to think such an impious unnatural design could enter into any mans heart. The Murder of a King then, who is our Civil Parent; has much more of horror and villany in it, then for a Child, cutting his Fathers throat, to imbrue his hands in the blood of him that begat him, or with *Nero* to rip up the womb that bare him; so that *Pilate* had very good reason to ask, *shall I crucifie your King?* from the Unnaturalness of the fact: And that much more aggravated, when we see, who invested him with that Authority, and in whose place and stead he governs; which is the second.

Gen. 1. 27.

As he is the Peoples Father, so He is Gods Vicegerent, and represents the Majesty of Heaven. Man in his nature bears the image of God; part of which was seen in his Dominion over the Creatures; But Those, who are intrusted with the Government of Men themselves, have far more transcendent Impreses and Characters of Divine Glory stamp'd upon their very Persons, which command the Venerations of the People; and the Prerogative of that high Office, *immane quantum*, doth eminently and by vast proportions exceed the Advantages of common Nature in single Persons,

Persons, and the Priviledges of whole Bodies and Societies of Men.

*Majestas populi*, the Majesty of the People (which some have pretended) is but a *Malkin* or Scarcrow, fit for a *Jack Cade* or a *Wat Tyler*, to swagger with among the Rabble, whose Government is no better then Foot-ball play, All fellows well met; But it is God himself, which cloaths *Kings* with the rays and splendors of his own Majesty; which made *St Peter* put that honour, we owe to the King, next to the fear of God. *Fear God, honour the King.*

*Beuhm fulmen*

1. Pet. 2. 17.

To tell you out of *History*, what Esteem and Reverence the most savage Nations, *Parthians*, *Armenians*, *Scythians*, *Indians*, have had and have still for their Monarchs, how their persons were in a manner inshrin'd, and not to be approached without solemn Devotion, and the seeming sense of a Deity, would be but to abuse my time, and indeed to upbraid the *English* humour, who have learnt in these late times to be too familiar with their Governours, and to make Majesty a cheap thing

And then further, to aggravate our Undutifulness; those Princes of theirs, whom they thus worshipt and honoured even to Adoration, were, many of them, of such personal qualifications, that they were not fit to keep civil men company; rather Beasts then Men, Monsters of Mankind and Prodigies of ill Manners; partly of such inhuman ferine Principles, partly of such lewd effeminate debauched Carriage, that they were unworthy to be the lowest parts; much less to be the Heads of well order'd Societies.

And indeed the Case of *Subjects* is much what herein, the same with that as *St Peter* tells us of *Servants*, that the Ingenuity and Commendation of our Respect and Obedience appears most, when we have cross ill humor'd Masters to deal with. And, I know not how, commonly it so falls out, that the worst of Tyrants have met with the best Subjects, whilst Rebellion has but taken advantage from gracious and virtuous Princes, of which this Day has given us a fatal Instance.

1. Pet. 2. 19.

'Tis one of *Pythagoras* his Precepts, *Adversus solem ne mingito*, Do not piss against the Sun; to teach us, with what Modesty and Reverence we ought to behave our selves in the sight of Heaven: Now he, that talks unhandsonly of his Prince, does this; but he, that offers Violence to his Person, strikes God himself in the face, and sets his Ponyard to the breast of the Almighty, at least assassins the Majesty of heaven in *Effigie*.

*make water*

I say, the murder of a King is not onely *Paricidium* the killing of a Father, but *Deicidium* too, God-slaughter; and the Regicide does as much, as a mortal wretch can do, murder God. Thus was it really in our *Saviours* Crucifixion; thus was it proportionably in our blessed *Kings* Martyrdom this day; so that *Pilate* had great reason to ask, *Shall I crucifie your King?* there being all the reason in the World, he should not. But there is one reason still behind. And that is, that the *King* is,

3. The *Guardian of the Laws*, the Well-spring of *Justice*, and the Overseer of publick *Peace and Order*. All our Complaints and Proceedings run in the *Kings* name, all the Magistrates act in a subordination to him, and draw Virtue and Influence from him.

We have a common saying, that *the King cannot do an Injustice*; and the reason is given, that his Officers and others employed by him are in all their Capacities accountable to the Law, but Himself above it. Not so above it, but that he is oblig'd to govern according to it, and to give life to his Authority by his *Royal Example*; but so above it, that, as All men are bound to give an account to him, so He to give account to none but to God alone, whose Lieutenant he is; nor does he, nor ought he, as our



*Royal Martyr* pleaded, own any but the Court of Heaven to be tryed by; God having reserv'd the cause of his Vicegerents to his own Cognizance, and exempted them from all humane Judicatures. For Kings are not barely the peoples Trustees, but have their Patents sign'd in heaven, and there must answer for their miscarriages and failures.

1 Tim. 6. 15.

Laws (we know) are *Vincula societatis*, the Bands and Ligaments of Society, the Sinews of Government; and God himself the supreme Sovereign, and *King of Kings*, in his great Government, (though he does sometimes make use of his Prerogative in extraordinary Events, and a kind of arbitrary Providence, yet does generally follow the known usual Methods of Rule, in ordering the Affairs of the World; and accordingly *Kings*, in their several Establishments, have their particular Institutes, and even in their seeming Irregularities and planetary eccentrical Motions, either as Man or as Governors, are still within the compass and comprehension of the greater Sphere, wherein that First Mover has his Walk; who by an over-ruling Providence, reduces all our seeming Disorders into a beautiful Order, and a quiet Composure; and will himself one day call to account the Misdemeanors of the petty Gods, his Viceroys, the Kings of the Earth.

This then is not work for Subjects to do, whose business is to Obey; and if at any time (as it may happen) their Sovereigns Conscience do not agree with theirs, or humane Commands, seem to thwart divine Precepts, to submit however, and cheerfully to suffer, leaving the Redress of their Grievances to the great Judge.

But to offer Violence to the King is to hamstring the State, to cut off all the Pipes of Justice, to outlaw the whole Country, to dissolve the frame of Government, and to reduce things into a *Chaos* and wild Confusion: as it was with Us, when the Father was murder'd, and the Son exil'd. And then to do this, as that was done, in a formal way of Justice, is to run Justice thorough with her own Sword; in a word to act over *Caligula's* wish, and to cut off the neck of the whole Commonwealth at a blow.

This is such a complication of Crimes, a violation of the whole Code of Laws both humane and divine, that it cannot be expressed by one single Name, without a large *periphrasis* of aggravating Epithets; a Villanous, Nefarious, Treasonable, Hellish action; that *Pilate* had but too good reason, as a meer Moral man, to startle at it, and to ask the Jews, *Shall I crucifie your King?*

And thus, as we are *Men*, upon a Moral account, we are oblig'd to reverence the Person of our King. But then, as we are *Christians*, much more still; and that upon these two obligations, of Scripture and our Oaths.

Exod. 22. 28.  
Act. 23. 5.

I. First as to *Scripture*; that is everywhere full, in its *precepts*, where it enjoins Honour and Obedience, in its *Prohibitions*, where it forbids all irreverent and undutiful Behaviour. [*Thou shalt not revile the Elohim the Gods, nor Curse the Ruler of thy People, that is, not speak unhandfomly of the Magistrate; so St Paul explains it:*] in its *promises* and encouragements to the Obedient, and in its *threats* and *curses* upon the Rebellious, that they shall be cut off and come to untimely ends. I need not amass places of Holy Writ to this purpose. Every good Book that treats of this Head, will present you with useful Collections in this kind, touching the duties that Subjects owe to their Prince.

One for all, and every Child knows it.

The *fifth Commandment* is acknowledg'd on all hands to belong to the Magistrate,

Magistrate, especially to the Supreme, the *King*, as *St Peter* declares it, *1 Pet. 2.* the inferiour Officers being sent by Him, and their power by consequence being only ministerial and derivative, 'tis Authentick and Immediate, depending upon none but God. Now this Precept, which *St Paul* tells us, is *the first with promise*, is the very Hinge, upon which both Tables of the Law turn, and in the observance whereof all the rest concenter; therefore placed by God purposely in the mid't of the *Decalogue*, that the Magistrate may know it his duty to be *Custos utriusque tabule*, the Keeper of both Tables; so that some have not doubted to reckon it in the first Table amongst the Duties we owe to God; Kings representing the Majesty of God, and deriving their Authority immediately from him, and thereupon frequently in Scripture having the very Title of Gods bestow'd upon them. Eph. 6. 2.

In a word, from the many Scriptural obligations, which Christians have to reverence and obey King, it is, that the Apostle concludes this obedience due, *not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake*; so that what *Pilate* a Heathen asked the *Jews*, might with more reason have been asked us *Christians*; you that pretend to follow the dictates of Scripture, will you against all Scripture *Crucifie your King*? will you impiously against the *Fifth* and *Sixth* Commandment both, put your King to death? Nor is our Conscience obliged by the Word of God alone, but by our own *Oath* also; which is our last. Rom. 13. 4.

2. Now an *Oath* has always been accounted, even amongst Heathen people, a sacred Tye; a thing of the greatest Religion, and that which doth most solemnly and severely bind the Conscience, especially where Christianity has had place, it being that, which, as the Author to the *Hebrews* says, puts an end to all controversies, and the breach of Oath lookt upon by all serious men, as the highest Affront to Heaven, and the greatest provocation of the God of Truth, to be invoked witness to a Lye. But as he is Witness, so he is Avenger, and does with signal judgments commonly punish Perjury and Falshood. History has store of such Exmples. Hebr. 6. 16.

Yet to consider, how the honest *English* have, of these late Yeais, been debauched and warpt in their noble Principle of integrity and square dealing in this kind, even well near to the infamy of a National Proverb, as bad as the old ones of *Græca fides* and *fides Punica*, or those of some of our neighbours; how we have plaid fast and loose with Oaths, and made that use of them, as cunning Gamesters do of Dice, to coy and rook one another out of our Interests with them; it would almost have made any ingenuous man, when time was, *ejurare patriam*, to forswear and abjure his own Country.

Particularly, for men of our Order, who cannot legally and orderly be admitted to it without swearing *Canonical* Obedience; to exercise this Function in a direct opposition to that Obedience, and in defiance of those Canons, is such a bold thing, that I cannot imagine, how they come by the confidence of shewing themselves to such multitudes, as throng after them; or how those poor deluded Souls can expect a blessing for their attendance upon such Exercises, as are bottomed upon publick falshood.

To our business; could we have been content to have kept to our Oaths of *Allegiance*, which obliged our duties to our Sovereign, the Nation had never been embroil'd with a Civil War, nor had this Day upon this account ever put on mourning in the *English* Calandar. So that to our Disloyalties we have added so many Perjuries, that the whole Nation has great

Mat. 26. 75.

great reason with *Peter*, for denying and forswearing her Master, to go out and weep bitterly.

Well might one have askt us twenty years ago, what the *Roman* Governour here asks the *Jews*. O *English* men, now worse than *Jews*, you that have been renown'd for your Honesty, and fam'd for your Loyalty to your Princes, will you with perfidious Disloyalty *crucifie your King* and your Conscience together? will you damn Your selves and murder your King?

Before I proceed any further, I must make good these Arguments, I have produced for the Safety of the *Kings* Person, and our own Loyalty; by answering three or four *Objections*, from some sorts of Men, whose Principles having been erroneous, and the Practices flowing from those Principles consequently pernicious; yet they are apt to salve all, by saying they acted according to Conscience. And truly I think some of them, Ignorant as they were, might do so, and thought possibly they did God good service in what they did. As to the generality, they were, I suppose, partly aw'd with Fear, partly misled by their Ambition and Interest, out of the *Kings* highway of Honesty, into by paths of their own, and the broad road of Rebellion. Nor wanted there some peradventure, who were the *Kings* enemies *gratis*, and out of their pure Malice. These are not worth the speaking too, as notoriously Convicted.

Those others, that pretend Conscience to unconscionable Actions, must know, that though it be a sad thing, a condition truly to be pitied, to have an erring Conscience, and so to be concluded into a Necessity of sinning, whether they act with or against Conscience; yet 'tis their fault they do not well inform themselves, before they engage in desperate designs and Practices; and that at last it will be no satisfaction to the Law, for a Malefactor to plead he acted according to Conscience. For there are two sorts of Conscience, a good and a bad; and truly, I think, there's but small difference between having no Conscience at all and having a bad one; if any, 'tis this, that an evil Conscience commonly proves the more mischievous of the two, as acting from a stronger spring of Malice, and with a greater vehemence of Zeal.

First then, the *Republican* is dissatisfied in his Judgment with the Kingly form of Government; his way, he thinks, would be more agreeable to the humour of the People, and the reason of Things. I shall not enter into a Debate, 'tis enough to Answer, we are preingag'd; some floating Illand may serve for an *Oceana*; we are settled. Were the thing *in integro*, were we to begin the World again, he might perhaps be heard, though few would follow him. Now 'tis no seasonable subject.

Rom. 7. 2:

He tells you, the People are still free. No; no more, then a Woman is, after she is married to a man, as long as that man lives; and we have a Maxim in the Law, that *the King never dies*. Our very Birth ingages us into a civil Obedience, as Children are oblig'd to their natural Parents without their own choice or explicit consent. We were born Subjects. We know, that was a taking word in the beginning of our troubles, *A free-born Subject*; but 'tis a Contradiction in terms. 'Tis true, so Free we are, that none can injure us, not the Government it self, but the Law will right us; so free, that we are not Slaves and Vassals, in a servile condition (as they are in many other Countries, God be blessed for it) but yet not so free neither, as to be *nostri juris*, at our own dispose, to be exempt, when we please, from our subjection. 'Tis said, *Levi* paid Tithes in  
*Abrahams*



Abraham's loins; and so did we pay Tribute and Tax, and own'd the Government in the loins of our Parents.

Again he tells you, that the Soverain may lie in check to his People, and is accountable to them, for Male-administration; and that upon this Oracle, which some forreign Divines, *Paræus*, and others, have sent us over, and we have made too ill use of, that the King is *Major singulis, Minor universis*; has greater power then any man, then every man severally, but less then all put together; which I have partly disprov'd before, by shewing that the Whole is equal to the Parts, (that's Demonstration) and that the Collection or Body of men has no distinct power, from what they had singly.

A great deal of such like unhallow'd stuff has been not only utter'd with great confidence out of the Pulpit and the Press, but acted too with great resolution in the Field and elsewhere. But if these things be so; *Pilate*, what need'st thou ask the question? why should not the Jews *Crucifie their King*? If it be so, what do we do here? Why do we celebrate the memory of a blessed *Martyr*, whose Murder was the result of this scheme of doctrines? I wish there be no dregs of these Opinions still left, I am sure of the next sort there are. And that is:

Secondly, The *Consistorians*, who amongst many other Tenets prejudicial to the Rights of Monarchy, hold, that if the supreme Magistrate refuse or neglect to reform, 'tis lawful then for the inferiour Magistrates, nay for the people, rigorously to set about the good Work without him. And hence sprung that which they call'd the *Cause*. And upon this bottom stood that Implement, which (as every evil thing does, the Proverb has it) came out of the North, the *Covenant*. I should not take it up out of its ashes, but that I see, it has been and is to this day still stood upon and maintain'd. The Reverend Dr *Sanderson*, late Bishop of *Lincoln* has said enough to it, to disprove its obligingness, and to shew the illegality of it.

That they meant well to the Kings Person (some of them) I am ready in charity to believe; but what need a new Oath for that? Their Allegiance was sufficiently secur'd by a former Oath, if they would but have stuck to it. But yet it seems this new one was so Ambidextrously contriv'd, that it might serve either way: for when it came to the debate, to satisfy nice Consciences, whether according to the Covenant, (which they regarded more then Scripture or Allgiance) they might take the Kings life: Some, that had a hand in making of it, made no scruple from this passage in it, that they had sworn *to preserve the Kings Person*: How? *in the maintenance of the Protestant Religion*, as it should be modelled according to the Word of God, and the patern of the best Reformed Churches, so far, it should seem, they were oblig'd by that, and no further. Now the Kings Principle being contrary to what they design'd Religion to be, 'twas judg'd expedient to the state of Affairs, and yet suitable enough to the Covenant too, to remove his Person. Was not this a meer *Jesuitical* juggle and Treason double-refin'd? And yet afterwards, when they had abolished Kingly government, then it was thought necessary to throw off the Covenant quite, as now out of date and no longer useful, and to send it back from whence it came.

And why then should any stick at the renouncing of it now, unless it be, that they have a greater tenderneſs of their Credit then of their Conscience? For is it not much more Ingenuious and becoming Christians, fairly

ly to retract an Errour, then by seeming to persist in it give publick scandal? I wish, they had had the same Tenderneſs, when time was, in departing from other Oaths legally impos'd by juſt Authority.

These indeed did ſay much what, as *Pilate* did, to the other Parties, *Will you crucifie your King?* but withal too, they did e'en as he did; they deliv'd him up to be crucified.

A third ſort are the wild *Seſtaries*, under ſeveral denominations; of a quite contrary pretence to the *Jews* here. For, ſaid the *Jews*, *We have no King but Cæſar*; ſay theſe, *we have no King, but Jeſus*. Thus *Jeſus* muſt be Crucified, as of an Intereſt Incompatible with *Cæſar*; and *Cæſar* muſt be crucified too, as an enemy of *Jeſus*. And yet *Chriſt* himſelf has fairly reconcil'd *God* and *Cæſar*, and ſhew'd, that their Intereſts and Services may ſtand very well together.

Mat. 22. 21.

But theſe people were very far from *Chriſt's* Evangelical temper, and were rather like ſome of the Zealots of the *Old Teſtament* Spirit. Here whatever they could meet with, that might reflect ſcandal upon Kings, they vented in their Meetings, nor were Pulpits themſelves too ſometimes free from ſuch factious Inſinuations, and vile Alluſions, never conſidering, what thoſe Kings were ſo ſpoken of, Aliens and of profane accuſed Nations; nor conſidering, what duty they ow'd to their own King, and how well he deſerv'd their Honour, not only for his Regal Right, but for his very Perſonal Virtues. I am very far from envying the People the Holy Scriptures in the Vulgar Tongue; but I heartily wiſh, they might be taught to make a better and a more modeſt uſe of that great Bleſſing.

Pſal. 149: 8.  
Judg. 5: 23.

Theſe being poſſeſt with an extraordinary ſpirit, thought it a *duty incumbent* upon them (as they love to ſpeak) to *bind Kings in chains, and Nobles in fetters of iron, and to help the Lord againſt the mighty*. Theſe were Engines, in thoſe times, to carry on publick Deſigns; and appearing moſt forward in the ſervice of the Cauſe, were own'd as the Godly party; who yet, moſt of them, as much diſlik'd the Uſurper, when they ſaw him got up into that place, out of which they had liſted the right Owner; but that he uſed *Jeroboam's* artifice, ſuppreſſing that Religion, which taught people, together with their Duty to God, Loyalty to their King; and giving toleration to all manner of Seſts, to engage the People into an impoſſibility of return to the ſervice of the Temple, or to the Houſe of *David*.

And I am affectionately concern'd for a many, perhaps not ill-meaning people, who ſtill follow that Calve, and keep on foot thoſe Schiſms, which were meerly deſign'd for the Security and Character of a proſperous Rebellion, and to make the Breach irreconcilable betwixt *Judah* and *Iſrael*. For though I wiſh no Order of men whatever ill, but have a cordial charity for all, and eſpecially my fellow Chriſtians and Countrymen; nor do I intend in all this to reflect upon Perſons, but to confute falſe and dangerous Principles; it muſt be acknowledg'd, (may God forgive them for it, and I wiſh, they may have repented of it) that theſe were they (ſome of them) that, like the *Jews*, fill'd the Judgment-Hall with their clamours for Juſtice; *Away with him, let him be crucified*.

From theſe we paſs to another ſort, perhaps not much better; men of a very Indifferent temper; that *Polypus* like, put on the colour of any thing comes next them; whoſe Principle is to ſtudy their own Quiet, and not concern themſelves in Church or State, which end goes foremoſt; but ſubmit to the preſent Power hand over head, own and obey him that

that is in Place, let him come by it how he will. And this the Author of the *Leviathan* sets down dogmatically; as if the Place it self gave sufficient Title, and there needed no more Right to the Throne, then to get into it. A Book as false to true Policy, as 'tis to Religion. For what security is there for Governor or Government, if it have no greater obligations upon the Subjects Conscience, or if an Usurpers Power be as obliging, as a just Princes.

And here the 13th of the *Romans* is as good Scripture on the one side, as 'tis on the other; *The Powers that be, are ordained of God* Surely that is not the meaning, that every one, that can get Power into his hand any how, whose clambering Ambition has at last thorough a Sea of Blood, and a world of Villanies advanc'd him to his Sovereigns Throne, that therefore God invests him with that ill gotten Power, or that he sits in that high usurped Place by Divine Commission, and the People straight oblig'd in Conscience to own them. God forbid that Kings should be no more secure! No, but by the *Powers that be*, there are meant Legal Powers, that are rightfully settled. 'Tis *esse*, *Powers in being*, or rather, *Real*, that is, rightfull *Powers*, as *esse*, is oppos'd to *cadere*, or *seueri*. Besides, Murders and Rapines, Treacheries, and Cruelties are but sorry Evidences of Gods Ordination.

If all men then were of that Authors mind, of so easie a Conscience, and ready Compliance, as to follow suit with any Interest that turns up, Sovereignty would be but a cheap Prize for the Ambitious, and a Title to Dominion purchas'd at easie Rates. Were all Subjects modell'd to the *Gnostick* carnal Principles of that Book, the same resolution of Quiet, which would restrain them from Resisting their Prince themselves, would also keep them from Assisting him against others; and should he for want of that Aid, they ow him, miscarry, perhaps they might be so good natur'd, to plant Cypress upon his Grave, but withal would be as ready to heap Laurels upon the Usurpers head.

They cannot for their own security be Actors in a Tragedy; but, so they may stand safe, will be content to be idle Spectators; And thus, in this days throng, they would not have cry'd, *Crucifie him*; yet in their hearts they would have said, What can we help it? *Let him be Crucified*.

A man of that indifferent Temper, that unconcerns himself in his Governors concerns, and hates trouble as the greatest Evil next to death, and for his Ease, which he prefers to all things, complies with any Power with any Design, that is but prosperous; I dare ingage all my Divinity, can be no good subject; he is no friend of *Cæsar's*; for if his Sovereigns safety and his own Interest come once into Competition, 'tis ten to one but self carries it.

Having prov'd the Inviolableness and sacred Character, which all Laws, Divine and Human, the nature of the Office, and the Customs of Nations, have put upon the Person of the King; and laid aside those Principles, which seem most obstructive to his safety; we now come to our second Proposition; *That 'tis a most Barbarous, Inhuman, and a Damnable Sin, for Subjects to offer violence to the Kings Person*. In which I shall be brief: For what need I say more, then has been said?

If it be Villany in the highest, for a Child to cut his Fathers throat; if an unpardonable Impiety, to attempt upon the blessed God, which was the sin of the evil Angels, who are therefore thrown into a irreconcilable state of damnation. *Rebellion*, I say, was their sin, which there-



1 Sam. 15. 23. fore is said to be *as the sin of Witchcraft*, that is, diabolical and almost impossible to be repented of; (I fear there are not many Instances) if it be an irreparable Injury and Malice in the abstract, to tear all Law up by the roots, to wrap up all in confusion, and to ruin Societies of Men; then for Subjects to murder their King, *the Father of the Country*, *Gods Vicegerent*, and the *Guardian of Laws and Good Order*, being all this, must need be a heinous Crime, never enough to be lamented, never sufficiently to be atton'd, without God's great Mercy to us, and our solemn Repentance for it.

Again, for those, who profess Christianity, and so should walk by *Scripture-rule*, and keep a good Conscience void of offence, deliberately and presumptuously to do that, which is directly and expressly contrary to the whole tenour of *Scripture*, and especially to the Doctrine of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and expressly and directly contrary to the solemn obligations of Conscience laid upon us by *Oaths* and *Promises*; must needs be a lewd crying sin, and a high provocation, to call for Vengeance not only upon the persons that commit it, but upon the whole *Israel* of God, and bring a Curse upon the Nation.

And such was this horrid Murder of the Lords Anointed, a Sin that carries so deep a tincture of Hell in it, is of so complicated a Mischief, that 'tis the Violation of all Laws Divine and Human, the boldest Transgression of all plain Rules of Duty, the downright renouncing of Christianity and desperately wounding of Conscience at once, and cauterizing the Wound; a Sin, that has made the Land not only an *Akeldema*, but a *Maranatha*, hardly to be expiated, but by a total Excision, and a final Extirpation.

All that can be said, is not enough; and yet what more can be said? Alas! this is not all; give me your patience before I make an end, to mention somethings peculiar to this Fact, which will beyond all expression aggravate and heighten our Crime. And they are these *Four*; I shall be very brief upon them, and leave you to make out the rest in your private Meditations.

The First is *the Excellence of the suffering Person*, besides what he was by his Place, both in his *natural* Indowments, and in his *moral* Virtues, and in his *spiritual* Graces; One, whose great Abilities of Judgment and Civil Prudence, his gracious and meek Temper; his rare Example of Chastity, Temperance, and all kind of Moderation and Continence in that place of high Temptations, and his constant Piety and steady well-weigh'd Zeal for the Reform'd Religion, and his judicious Friendship to the Church of *England*, as the best Pattern of that Religion, were sufficient to have recommended him to the Throne, had it not been His by Birth, and to have commanded the Love, and Honour, and Admiration, the Esteem and Reverence of any Man, that had a kindness for Virture, and a love for any thing that Good is.

Above all, in his sufferings, wherein he was indeed Glorious, and by the Incoms of Gods Blessed Spirit upon him far excell'd himself, with what Meekness and Patience did he run his race? With what Courage did he fight his fight, resisting unto blood? Never any man in all the Complexion of his Griefs so near resembled his Saviour, nor never any King was so barbarously used by his own, but the *King of the Jews*.

But if you would have a full Pourtrait of his Princely mind, I must send you to his own Book, a Book, next to the Psalms of *David*, of incomparable Devotions; and I am upon this very account heartily reconcil'd to the worst of his Enemies; that as Spices, when they are chafed and

and pounded, send forth the strongest odours, and rare Extracts are fetched from Nature, when she is tortur'd in the Furnace and Crucible; so possibly we owe those precious Productions partly to their Ill-usages; And I question not, but the *Royal Martyr* did from his Soul forgive them, and desire God to forgive them too the more, when he reflected upon those great Advantages, his Afflictions brought to his Inward man, and lookt forward upon his approaching heightned Glories.

Secondly, *The Circumstances of the Fact*, and the Methods of Wickedness, ere it came to that pitch; his Acts of Grace at first abused to further Incroachments; never let alone, till he had parted with All, even to the Hazard of his Honour and Conscience; pelted with Ordinances and Remonstrances, defam'd with Libels, affronted with Tumults, hussill'd and forc'd to fly for safety; one while Repulsed, another while pursued like a *Partridge upon the Mountains*; at length, after his Escape, betray'd by his own Countrymen, bought and sold; then Imprison'd, and posted up and down, to make a progress of his sufferings: Till at last, the Design being now ripe; he was brought to Tryal, formally sentenc'd, villanously murdered in the face of the Sun, before his own Palace-gate.

1 Sam. 26. 20

Will Posterity believe this? O direful Action! enough to have put out, at least to have blinded that glorious Eye of Heaven. Such a Mockery of Justice, such a Pageant of Villany, as thou, *O Sun*, never beheld'st either before or since, but when thou saw'st the Son of God hanging on the curs'd Tree. And in all the passages of it, this dismal Royal Scene came so near that of our Saviours Passion, that had this *Martir'd Prince* liv'd before Christ, He had been a most incomparable Type of him, as now He is the exactest Copy of that blessed Original, as all History can produce.

Thirdly, *The Universality of the Guilt*, for I make it a National Charge The Sin lies at every mans door. We were not all Contrivers or Abettors; some indeed were the Instruments; but all of us were the Occasion; and in case of Murder, we know, an Accessory becomes Principal.

I shall not tell you of Cardinal *Richlieu's* Maxim, that till *England* were made a Commonwealth, there would be little hopes for the return of Popery; nor of that usual Observe, that when the Sword is once drawn *then* against a Soverain, it seldom finds the way back to the Scabbard again; nor take notice, that a righteous Cause may be spoil'd by ill Managery. All Parties, all Orders and Degrees of men, had a hand one way or other, in this Murder.

There was an Universal Corruption, and we were grown wanton with the Blessings of Peace, and had forgot our Duty to God, and to our King, and to our selves. The whole Nation is involv'd in the Guilt, and looketh like *Gens sacra*, as it were devoted, (which God avert) to some sad Destruction, if not prevented by timely Repentance. And 'tis well, if it can this once a Year find some tears to shed towards the Expiation.

It would be too long to draw up a Catalogue of *National Sins*, which might be the Occasion of this great Sin and Judgment. Let every one reflect upon his own, that those were the *Achans*, which troubled the Camp, and brought this great Evil upon the Land.

Lastly, *The ill Consequents of that execrable Murder* ; as,

1. *The great scandal of Religion.* Do we own our selves Christians? Do we pretend to the Reformed Religion? Let us be asham'd of our Profession; for it is long since asham'd of us and our Practices; Let us even burn our Bibles, and pull down our Churches, the Monuments of our Ancestors Piety, and run wild and turn *Pitts* again. Never any of our *Heathen* Progenitors in this Isle were guilty of such a Wickedness, as we their Gospelling Children have committed.

Judg. 16. 9.

2. *The Infamy of the Nation.* Surely the *English* Credit must needs be much sunk amongst all sober People; when Oaths and Scriptures would not hold us, but like *Samsons* Withs, when we had a Design and shook our selves, burst to pieces about us. What did they think of us abroad? What did they say? Certainly an *Englishman* could not look upon Strangers, with so cheerful open a countenance, as formerly. Alas! this stain is not so easily worn off. This Character of the Kings Blood, like *Cain's* Brand, will stick by us, as long as we are a Nation.

3. And I have done. *Some signal National Vengeance to come.* 'Tis true, the sin it self was a very great Judgment. *Sceleris in scelere supplicium.* And since that time, I must acknowledge, we have been severely exercis'd; what with Unsettlements, Tumbings and Tossings in the times of Usurpation; and what, since the miraculous Restitution, with War and Sickness, and a dreadful Conflagration. But I pray God, there be not something else, like *total* and *final*, that we may expect. Such crimson daring Sins, as this, are wont so to be punished, and at a great distance of time to be visited upon Generations to come.

*Astrologers* tell us, that *Comets* and *Eclipses* sometimes, and extraordinary *Aspects*, do not presently shew their Effects. 'Tis so, I am sure, in Gods method of Punishing. He doth not pour out all his Indignation at once; but gives people a time of Probationership for Judgment, to see whether they will repent. I wish poor *England* be not upon such a Probation. It was forty years, after the wicked Murder of the Holy *Jesus*, ere the threatned vengeance (which in the New Testament is often called the *coming of Christ*, and *the end of the World*) came upon the *Jewish* Nation, in the utter destruction of their City, Temple, and Commonwealth. And who knows, what we are to look for, and how soon or how late it may come upon us? What *Pella* have We to go to, when such a thing shall befall us? What City of refuge to fly to from before the Avenger of this Blood? What sanctuary to betake ourselves to, but thy Mercy alone, O most merciful God? who, as thou hast threatned to destroy obstinate Impenitent Sinners, and to turn the evil of their ways upon their own head; so art always ready to receive those, that with unfeigned repentance return unto thee. *O do thou turn us, and we shall be turned.*

Lam. 5. 21.

Psal. 51. 14.

*Deliver us from Blood guiltiness, O God of our Salvation*; and by the Blood of thy Son, which was shed even for the sins of those that spilt it, cleanse this Nation from the guilt of her late Sovereigns Blood, and accept of her Humiliations; and grant that we may all of us by true Repentance, and an universal Reformation of life, return unto thee, that hast so often smitten us, and so may avert those heavier and sorer Judgements yet, which else, we have just cause to fear, may be hanging over our heads, and those Evils which thou art watching thy self to bring upon us.

O Lord



O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do, for thy Names sake, by which we are called; for thy Gospels sake, which we unworthily profess; and for thy dear Sons sake, (to whom thou mad'st our *Royal Martyr* so conformable in his sufferings, in his Patience, in his Charity, Praying for his Enemies to the last) to which thy only begotten and well beloved Son we desire, together with thy Self and Blessed Spirit, to render, as is most due, all Praise, Honour, Glory, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

Dan. 9. 19.



A

A Sermon upon the BIRTH and RETURN of  
**King CHARLES II.**

Preached in *Guildhall Chappel*, before Sir *THOMAS DAVIES*  
 then Lord Mayor; May 29. 1677.

Prov. XXIV. 21.

*My son, fear thou the Lord and the King; and  
 meddle not with them, that are given to change.*



His Book is acknowledged to be a Treasury of divine *Morals* and *Politicks*, for Prudence and Piety, instructing us how to demean and to secure our selves in all conversation. The Words, I have now read to you, seem to be an Abstract and Abridgment of the whole Book, a kind of short *Catechism* and Account of Religion, reaching forth an advice of the greatest concern for *Church and State*, for Piety and Policy both; how a man may be a good *Christian*, and a good *Subject*, by ordering himself piously and devoutly towards God, dutifully and loyally towards the Magistrate; and in order to this, not to go into any by-paths, which the Rules of the *Church*, and the Laws of the *Country* do not allow, for fear he fall into *Schism* on the one hand, or *Rebellion* on the other, by appearing one amongst those that are *given to change*. For he that is given that way, gives a shrewd sign, that he is not sincere in his duties either *religious* or *civil*, but would, when opportunity might serve, utterly throw them off, and disclaim and desert all his obligations, to the disturbance of publick peace, and the indangering of his own private *interests* at once.

In the Words we have two main parts.

I. A double *Duty* laid down, *Fear the Lord and the King*; or rather a single *Duty*, one included and comprehended in the other. For he, that fears the Lord, will fear his Vicegerent; and again he that truly fears the King, will fear him in the Lord; not only for *wrath*, or for favour and self-ends, but for *Conscience-sake*.

Rom. 13. 5.

II. A further *Caution*, which may serve either as an *Expedient* how to secure the performance of that duty, or, if you will, the *Consequent* which attends the performance of it, *Meddle not with them, &c.*

1. As an *Expedient*, *Fear God and the King*; and that thou may'st fear them, as thou ought'st to do, *Meddle not with those who would tempt thee to change.*

2. As

2. As a Consequent, in that he that fears them, *will not meddle*, that is, If thou dost truly fear God and the King, thou wilt not meddle, and by that means wilt save thy self from that *calamity* and *ruin*, which is threatened in the following *Verse*.

I. For the *Duty*, I cannot but take notice in the first place of the Manner of recommending it, wherein *Wisdom* addresseth herself by way of parental Advice, in prudent and affectionate language, *My Son, fear thou the Lord, and the King*; as if she had said, If thou hast any love for thy self; if thou hast any regard to me, who tender thee as a Mother does her child; if thou wouldst see good days; if thou hast a mind to secure thy estate and credit in the society thou livest in; if thou desirest to leave a flourishing Posterity behind thee; in a word, if thou wouldst be a Happy man in this World, and a Blessed man in the next, take my counsel: I'll deliver it in brief, *Fear God and the King*, hold thee fast to thy *Religion*, and to thy *Allegiance*; and to this end be sure thou dost not, nay, if thou hast that fear in thee, I am sure thou wilt not *meddle with them that are given to change*. For if thou dost, mind my words, thou wilt rue it one day, one time or other thou wilt dearly pay for't. *For their calamity shall arise suddenly*, and then thou, as one of their Complices and Adherents, wilt be surpriz'd, and *who knows the ruin of them both?* of them that depart from the fear of *God*, or the *King*; of them themselves, and of their Associates and Abettors?

The Duty is in general, *Fear*. Now *Fear* strictly is the apprehension of future ill; so we fear those, that can do us any hurt; and even in this sense, we are to fear them both; *God*, as the Supreme Power, according to that advice, our Saviour gives, *Fear not them that can kill only the body, and after that have no more that they can do: But fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, Fear him*. And then the *King*, as *God's Minister*, who beareth not the *Sword in vain*. But fear here must be understood in a more comprehensive Notion so as to contain in it all those *duties* which we ow to the one, or the other, to *God* principally, and to the *King* subordinately, as under him Supreme.

Luk. 12. 4. 5.  
Rom. 13. 4.

1 Pet. 2. 13.

I shall speak of those duties first *severally*, and then *jointly*; where I shall also shew why they are both exprest in the same Term of *fear*, whereas *St Peter* seems to make a distinction, when he says, *Fear God, honour the King*. And in this part I shall be but short, by reason there are few but understand their *Duty* well enough, so that that needs no great Inlargement; and because I intend to bestow the more of my time upon the latter part of my Text, the *Caveat*.

1 Pet. 2. 17.

First then *severally*, what 'tis to *fear God*, the Grounds and Instances of this fear, together with the Motives and Inducements to it.

To *fear God*, is to have awful apprehensions of him in our thoughts, and suitable applications of mind to him, according to the several Excellencies and Perfections of his Nature, in all his glorious and tremendous Attributes; to wear those notions deeply imprinted upon our spirits, accompanied with humble Resentments of our own Vileness, Weakness and Sinfulness; and to keep our distance in the very Approach of our hearts before him; To shew Reverence of him in our Words and Expressions, to speak honourably of him, not to be too familiar with his Name, or any thing that bears relation to him, nor boldly to dispute those discoveries of his essence, and declarations of his will, which he hath made to us in his Word, and in his Works: And that in our Actions we walk carefully before him and



Mat. 6. 4.

and fear to offend him; that we set his fear alway before us, so as in the whole tenour of our lives to carry our selves awfully towards him; and more especially to express our reverential Regards, when we appear before him, both in our publick Addresses when we come into the Church his Presence-chamber, and in our private Retirements when we go into our Closet, where he sees us in secret.

Psal. 76. 12.

Psal. 68. 21.

Psal. 34. 10.

And this all upon this Ground, that God is the great *Governour* of the world, the allwise and almighty disposer of Events, and orderer of human Affairs; as to Acts either of *Vengeance* and *Chastisement*, overthrowing unjust Empires, cutting short the Spirit of ambitious Princes, defeating evil Counsels, bringing great Designs to nought, punishing wicked Families, detecting Hypocrites, and wounding the hairy scalp of those that go on still in their Wickedness; or of *Mercy* and *Deliverance*; helping the Oppressed to right, favouring the Righteous; providing subsistences for the Needy, finding out strange ways of escape out of Danger, and in fine that has promised, and will in his due time provide, that no Good thing shall be wanting to those that fear him; and further, that he is the supreme *Law-giver* and *Judge* of Mankind, who overlooks all our Actions, and closest Designs, and will one day call us to a severe Account.

Psal. 111. 10.

1 Tim. 2. 2.

And this *fear of God* further recommended, in that 'tis the bottom of all true spiritual Wisdom; that 'tis a Security against all other fears, since he who fears God, needs fear nothing else; and a Preservative against all Sin, and wilful offence, and a good Preparative for the peace and welfare of Society, by restraining Peoples minds within the due Limits of their subjection, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.

Next for the *fear*, which is due to the *King*, we stand obliged both in *Conscience* to God, whose *Vice-gerent* he is, from whom his Authority is derived, since all just powers are ordain'd by him; and out of *Interest* to Our selves. he being the publick *Guardian*, upon whose well-coming the welfare of the whole Community doth depend.

And this *fear* or dutiful Respect to be shewn, in revering his Person as sacred, a thing customary even among the most barbarous Nations; in obeying all his Commands, when not directly and plainly contrary to the express Word of God himself; in giving him all assistance in his Concerns; and (which every one, even the meanest of his Subjects, can and ought to do) in praying heartily for Him, for his Health and Happiness, for Gods favour, and all manner of Blessings upon Him and His, upon his Person, his Family and his Government.

Thus briefly, as we promised, we have gone over the *distinct* Considerations of *Duty*, now we are to treat of them *jointly*, and to shew, why those Duties we ow to God and the King are set together, and why express'd both in the same Term of *fear*.

Jam. 3. 17.

The summ of all *Religion* is to be, as pure in Holiness, so peaceable in Righteousness; when we order our selves piously to God, and obediently to the *Magistrate*, whose place it is to maintain Gods Worship, and the rules of publick Justice, as being the Guardian of both *Tables*; for which reason it was, that the *fifth Commandment* is placed in the middle, as *cardo legis*, the Hinge, upon which the whole Law turns; insomuch, that by some good Authors 'tis reckoned into the *first Table*, which prescribes the Duties we ow to God. And indeed none can properly be said to be a true Servant of God without Loyalty, nor a true loyal Subject unless he

he be also a servant of God; it being little less then Contradiction in terms, to be either a *Rebel-Saint* or a *Prophane Loyalist*, since he, who casts off the fear of the heavenly Majesty, will easily be tempted upon advantage to throw off the fear of his Vice-gerent; nor can he be supposed in earnest to fear God above, who shews himself irreverent and undutiful to his lawful Sovereign, whom God hath set over him here on earth.

The Interests of *Church* and *State*, of *Religion* and *Policy*, are so nearly twisted together and interwoven, that they cannot be sever'd from one another, without the utmost hazard to both; and in all factious attempts God's Honour as well as the King's is made a sufferer, it being usual that *Rebellion* and *Schism* go hand in hand, and do *mutuas operas tradere*, in assisting and abetting one another. I need produce but an instance or two of this, taken out of the *Israelitish* Story. *Korah* and his Crew pretended their design only against *Aaron's* Pontifical dignity and Episcopal preheminance; yet *Moses* perceiv'd, they aim'd at the civil Magistrates power through the High Priests sides, and therefore however many of the Congregation cried them up for the people of the Lord, he dealt with them as State-Rebels; as plainly foreseeing, that what began in *Schism*, would end in *Rebellion*, and that the pretence of Ecclesiastical Reformation was only to Sanctify a wicked Conspiracy.

Num. 16;

On the other hand, the Defection and Revolt of the *ten Tribes* commenced with Civil grievances, and indeed seems so far to have bin permitted by God, as a punishment to *David's* Family; but when the Usurper had once possessed himself of the power of his Master and the hearts of his Subjects, to make a Return impossible, he strengthen'd and secured his Rebellion by a schismatical Separation from the service of the Temple. And this was that, which laid an indelible brand of Infamy upon his name, *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, who made *Israel* to sin. Let me pursue this a little further.

1 King. 12;

Poor *Samaritans*, having shaken off their Allegiance, quickly threw their Religion after it, turned Schismatics, worshipt their new Governours Calves, which, whether Reliques of the *Egyptian* Idolatry or only resemblances of the *Cherubs* in the Tabernacle, were highly offensive, as withdrawing people from the place of solemn Worship, which God himself had made choice of; and after that, upon every new succession, were brought into new Superstitions, witness the statutes of *Omri*; till at last, overrun with idolatrous Impiety, they led the dance to that final Excision, which, some years after, through the just Judgment of God, for the Murther of his Blessed Son, that Righteous one, and by their own Divisions, beset their brethren of *Juda*.

So necessary it is, even for the preservation of a People, that they be oblig'd to fear God and the King, and to keep strictly to Religious Worship and civil Obedience, as by wholsom Laws establish'd; since the Violation of one doth so naturally draw after it the Decay of the other, and at last Confusion and Destruction to the Community it self.

I know Some there are, would mince the matter, and say that this fear, we ow to the King, is of onother and a quite different nature from that we ow to God. And this may be thought the rather, because *St. Peter*, 1 Ep. 2 Chap. 17 Ver. who probably had an eye upon this place, as may appear by the Scope and Collation of them both, has distinguished

stinguished upon it, and given us this document in another Character as to the King; *Fear God*, says he, *Honour the King*; and this *honour* such a thing, as in fair proportion is due to every man; for so the same St. Peter in that very place had said, *Honour all men; love the brotherhood*, and then *Fear God, Honour the King*.

First I say Negatively, that St. Peter did not change the word purposely to lessen the King's Authority, or to let the duty of Subjects lower: since it appears by the History and Doctrine of the *New Testament*, that Christianity is so far from abating the Rights of Kings and civil Magistrates, that it confirms and settles them in their place, and heightens and improves the obligations of our Obedience.

Then Positively I answer that *honour* there and *fear* here are words *Synonymous*, of the same importance; no more difference betwixt them then betwixt *τιμάω* in Greek, and *timeo* in Latine; *honour* being an outward expression of our inward *reverency*; so that this Honour due to the King is a peculiar and uncommon honour, not the same with that, which is to be given to all men.

'Tis true *Honour* is an Acknowledgment of any Excellence in an other, and every man is to be honoured according to his Place; but he whom God hath made *supreme*, and has invested with sovereign Authority, is to be honoured with *fear*.

In a word, the King, being Gods Vice-gerent, and being incircled with Rays of divinity, as to his Office and Place (*I have said ye are Gods*) is allowed, and recommended to peoples Veneration, with the same expression of humble duty as God himself. Thus in their Indowments *God and the King* were join'd: *He hath blasphemed God and the King*, was the form of drawing up the Charge. Will you have a further instance? *Moses* is said to have been King in *Jeshurun*. The people, *Exod. 14. 31. believed the Lord and his Servant Moses*. Now faith, whereby we believe in God, is much more then *fear*, and more peculiarly belonging to him; and if *that* may be communicated, as here it is, to his servant *Moses*, much more may *fear* be allowed to his Vice-gerent.

Joh. 10. 34.

1 Kin. 21. 13.

Deut. 33. 5.

And so from the Duty we proceed to the Caution, *not to meddle with those that are given to change*, which I told you might bear a *two-fold* sense, as an Expedient for that duty, or as a Consequent of it; which is the very thing St. Peter, in the forecited place, drives at; says he, *Honour all men, love the brotherhood*: give every Man his due respect, be kindly affected towards the Community and Church, of which ye are members; and to do this, *Fear God, Honour the King*, for by doing this ye will shew the *fear* ye ow to God, and the *Honour* due to the King and his Laws; which is the very Importance of this place.

1. Take it as an *Expedient*. The way to keep thee in God's fear and in that duty thou owest to thy Prince, is to forbear the company of such persons, to keep at distance from them; to have nothing to do with them. For on the contrary, when any one does give himself such a liberty, he will find that *fear* insensibly to decay and wear off, his love to the Church and care of duties there to be perform'd, to grow slack, his love and *honour* to his Sovereigns person, and his obedience to his authority to flag. For there is nothing so catching, as the desire of *Change*. Wherefore to secure us in our duties, we ow to God and the King, to Church and State, it is our safest course to



to be strangers to those, whose acquaintance and friendship may draw us aside.

2. As a Consequent. He that hath any *fear* for God or *honour* for the King, will keep himself within Compass, will not go out of the Road, or associate himself with those, whose Principles and Practices, whatever they may pretend, tend to *change*. This is a certain sign, that a man is *bent timoratus*, well season'd with this *fear*, when he keeps to the good old way, and does not indulge himself in the fond inquiries after Novelty: whereas for a man to be listning after overtures of *change*, argues that he is Weary or Uneasy, at least Unsteddy and Wavering, where he is. A *pious* soul, a *loyal* heart will admit of nothing, that may shake or call in question its fidelity; nor, what Sir Thomas Overbury saies of a Wife, *Let temptation come so near, as to be denied*. We cannot be too nice and shy in these principles of Religion and Loyalty. To be seen amongst these Changers, gives suspicion at least of some *change*, which every man, that is truly Wise and Good, will studiously avoid all occasions of.

But we must not so easily shift our selves of these *Changers*, but inquire *first*, Who they are, *secondly* shew what 'tis *not* to meddle with them, and *thirdly*, lay down some reasons, Why they are not to be medled with.

1. Who they are. שוֹנֵי. A word of so many significations, as *Interpreters* have translated it, as if it had been chosen on purpose for these Changers. *Those that are given to change*, say We; those that are apt to change both principles of Religion, and principles of Loyalty, that is to turn aside from the fear of God and the King, and that actually do change: that is such as have cha.g'd and will, if they ever meet with such providential Advantages again, change on, *Iterantes*. They will go over it again, and never have done, though strangely disappointed; yet 'twas not *calamity* and *ruin*, thanks to Gods mercy and the Kings. I wish it were gracefully remembered: But some there are, such *Changers*, that to the great abuse and high provocation of Clemency, seem by Clemency it self encouraged to hold on.

Some have it *Variantes*, that vary their Course through all points of the Compass, run out of one form of Government and Worship into another, and know no end of change, till they are even at their wits end.

The Vulgar has it *Detractores*, that detract and speak evil of Dignities, both temporal and spiritual; that being the great Artifice of those, who with a Government chang'd, first to defame it.

'Tis remarkable how the *Chaldy* and *Syriack* render the word *fools* and *foes*. Indeed they prove so in the end; all Changes and attempts of change, as they are of very dangerous consequence to publick security, so prove no less to the designers of change themselves.

In the *Interlinear Gloss* 'tis *Declinantes*, Struglers, that go out of Gods and the Kings Highway.

And these Changelings or Detractors or foolish Straglers are of *two* sorts, in respect of God and the King, *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil* Changers, *Simeon* and *Levi*, *Religious* and *Politick* Male-contents.

1. *Politicians*, whose ambitious minds, being not contented with their present condition, put them upon *Machiavillian* designs, to trouble the waters and to render Government odious and grievous to the people, that their own way be backed with popular discontents. These care not what becomes of King or Church, so their turns may be serv'd;

what *religion* or what form of *government* be set up, so they may be set up with it.

2. *Schismaticks*, who blow the coals, those others have lighted, inflame the people with an unreasonable Zeal, sanctifie politick Villany and put a Varnish of Religion upon the blackest designs. Be for what you will, if you are for *change*, if you appear a Patron of a new Cause, they will preach and pray it up. I wish, if there be any such amongst us, they would rather study that necessary change of their own minds, and apply themselves to the fear of God and the King, as they should do.

II. What 'tis *not to meddle* with them; do not be concern'd with them, *ne te consocias*, do not keep company or enter into partnership with them, do not join with them in those things which tend to change. This Prohibition then is not meant of all manner of Conversation: For if it were so we should be obliged peradventure, what St Paul says in another case, to go out of the world. But if they be *Politicians* we must not tamper with them in their Plots and Conspiracies; if *Schismaticks*, not join with them in their Worship or Discipline, not meddle with them in such things, wherein either of them stand in a distinction and opposition, either to Church or State; for this were to be one of them.

1. Cor. 5. 10.

Before we proceed to the *Reasons*, let me answer a bold *Objection*, which brings these people, whom the wise man bids you beware of, into Credit and Reputation. As for Instance, there are those will tell us, these *Politicians* we here speak of, are men of Parts, of great Knowledge, of popular publick Spirits, men of Estates and Fortunes, and zealous for their Countries service; that those, whom we call *Schismaticks*, are men of great Scripture-Knowledge, of deep Study in the word of God, of extraordinary gifts in Prayer, of rare winning eloquence in Preaching, men of sound Doctrine and holy Life.

Grant all this: Why, 'twas ever so. What *Heretick* or *Schismatick*? what *Rebel* or *Traitor* ever wanted such pretences? The Devil makes use of no Fools, but imployes likely men of Brains and Resolution. I dare say, no Heresy or Schism, no Rebellion or Sedition could fairly be promoted or carried on but by such Men.

2. Sam. 15.

*Abolon*, see how he complimented and carested the people; he was a Taking man, of great natural Parts, of comely Person and courteous Carriage, and had *Achitophel*, the Headpeice of the Nation for his Counsellor, one lookt upon as an Oracle. Would such a Wise man (they say) go with him, if it were not as it should be? In the close, all *Israel* went after him, and all his Father *David's* Merits as well as his Rights were forgotten, besides all other advantages. And *Novelty* it self was a great Attractive to vulgar spirits.

*Jeroboam*, without all peradventure, a great Patriot of his discontented Countrymen, and a man of deep Policies, and one perhaps has hardly been parallel'd in Story, till our late *Usurpers* time, who learned from him to fasten and rivet rebellion with schism, and has, it may be fear'd, outdone his Master.

*Arrius*, who denied the Divinity of *Christ*, was, no question, a man of Learning and Life. 'Twas that gave him Credit in the World. *Univ-ersus Mundus factus est Arrianus*, saith St. *Athanasius*.

His present followers pass for great Masters of Reason, high Improvers of Morality, and men, no doubt, many of them, of severe Converse.

*Hereticks* always had this advantage of the *Orthodox*, if they could either out-preach or out-live them; and it was just for God, in those cases to let them get ground.

It

Is it not so with the *Turks* themselves at this day, whose Worship is directed to an Impostor; yet since they have bin more Sober, more Just, more Devout in their way, then common *Christians* are; this, by Gods just judgment, has enlarg'd their Conquests and settled their Power. When once they fall into *Christians* sins, we may expect the fall of their Empire.

Schismatics had always the same to say for themselves.

The *Donatists* and *Novatians* were purer then others, and therefore seperated from the ordinary Christian assemblies.

But what then? were *Abfolon* and *Feroboam* ere a whit the less Rebels for their great Parts and plausible Carriage? or were those others less Hereticks, or less Schismatics, for their Learning or their Life? No, but much the worse. This upon the supposal. But to remove the Mistake, 'tis not so, as some imagine. They call that *goodness* and *learning*, and the like, which, if examin'd, is not so.

First then mark These men well, and you'll find their's a dangerous Mixture of their fine Parts, and their foul Designs. 'Tis said, whilst the Husband man slept, the Enemy sow'd tares among the wheat. Observe, if there be no *Tares*. These, who are cried up for great *Patriots* and men of rare Parts, do not they cover their own ambitions or revengeful thoughts with a pretence of publick zeal and popularity, making the people the sumpture juments of their private Passions and Designs? Those, who are so much magnified and follow'd for their preaching and praying, have not they a leaven? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees (saies our Saviour) not that all their Doctrine was corrupt, but there was an ill leaven in it. They preach *Christ*, *free grace*, *Gods election*; but take notice of those other Principles they interweave. Unwary hearers are easily taken. These are but the Looking glasses to draw in a Party, that, by being of their number they may fancy themselves to be the *Elect*. Their own Writings will inform us, and our late Stories tell us sufficiently, that they have acted fully according to such Principles, which perhaps they do not always hold forth in their discourses, but do subtilly insinuate upon occasion; yet so, that any considering Hearer may perceive (what the Sons of the Prophets said) that *there is death in the pot*.

Mat. 13. 25.

Mat. 16. 6.

2 Kin. 4. 40.

Again, consider the tendency and drift of such Principles, supposing the Person themselves are pious and honest, and mean the publick no hurt, but only follow their own Conscience, and think they do God good service in what they do. Yet see the *End*. That's the part of Wisdom. What doth this drive at? When our late *Civil War* began, and the *Covenant*, that Instrument of Confederacy, was first proposed; did they themselves, some of the promoters of it, think? could they foresee, what it would come to; that their right and lawful *Sovereign* should be murdered, and an *Usurper* set up in his room? I am confident they did not. There were Complaints and Grievances on the *Politick* side, that lookt plausible; Fasts and Sermons on the *Religious* part; good exercises in themselves. I will not say that was the immediate design of all those who complain'd or Preacht in those times. And yet though they may, and I believe must, many of them, be acquitted from the Intention of that wicked Act; yet, I fear, they cannot be excused wholly from the Guilt of it; and that sacred Blood, though their hands were not imbrued in it, yet dasht upon their Cloaths. For what they themselves never intended to do, the Under parties and inferiour Sects, which, upon their making the first Schism, broke in upon us, made no scruple of conscience to put in execution.

The



The least breach in a Damm, by giving vent and out-let to the imprisoned Waters which lay quiet, whilst within their bounds, heightens their violence till they beat down all before them. Thus small departures at first from that Duty we owe to the *King* and the *Church*, carry men on by gradual improvements, till at last they dare offer downright Affront and desperate Defiance to both.

Nor will it serve turn to say, it was God's will, it should be so, or to throw the burden upon the sins of the Nation, when they were the men that open'd the Sluce for that desolation, which flow'd in upon us. So hard is it to discern those Evils, which may attend irregular Designs, though at first they appear never so gay and specious. What said *Hazael* in the like case? when *Elisha* told him, that he should dash children and rip up women with child. 2. *Kin.* 8. 13. *Am I a dog*, that I should do so? He was of a more ingenuous Education, of fairer Principles, and had more sense of Humanity, then to commit such barbarous Outrages; yet he did it; so *Providence*, as we in the late times were wont to phrase it, led him on..

III. Having removed this *Objection*, we come in the last place to the *Reasons*, Why men thus given to change are not to be medled with. Not that I imagin here is any one concern'd, but I speak in God's fear and in conscience to the *King* and duty to the *Church*, to confirm you, and to precaution all; and so far all are concern'd, as to Instruction and Precaution. If any one be any otherwise or any further concern'd, let him seriously consider, as I shall seriously propose. The duty of the *Day* requires it,

1. If thou dost *meddle*, thou dost not know, how far thou mayest go. *Uno absurdo dato*. When a man is stept out of his Way once, the further he goes, the more he is still out of his way. We all see, where a man begins, but he cannot himself tell where he shall end; Rebellion being like the Sin of Witchcraft, which ingages men beyond repentance. Remember *Hazael*, Remember our late *Reformation*. To come close. Thou likest a person, thou approvest his Discourse, his Doctrine, one thing leads thee on to an other, till at last thou art wholly ingag'd and taked in all the concerns of the Faction, and then thou art totally estran'gd from thy Duty. This is more sadly to be considered, in that by thus doing thou art out of Gods way; thou puttest thy self out of his protection, and canst not expect his blessing, when thou offerest thy self thus to temptation. For what hast thou to do in such Company? what Call hast thou to be there?

2. Though thou mayest thy self be Innocent, yet thou art wrapt up in others Guilt. Thy Reputation at present and thy Fortunes and Posterity too at long run may be in danger. First thou exposest thy self to a present Censure. For what can any one say of thee? what esteem can they have for thee, who lovest to converse with Changers? Then besides those Hazards and Defeats, which are the natural Consequents of Rebellion and Schism, in the judgment of God sooner or later some great Vengeance pursues and overtakes thee; (for God will acquit himself) and thou, though thou art in thine own Conscience clear, yet what madest thou amongst them? *Moses* thus warn'd the people to go from the Schismaticks Tents, for fear of being involv'd in the same ruine.

3. Supposing that Thou and They escape, certainly thou wilt suffer one day in the peace of thy Conscience. For how canst thou assure thy self of *peace* within, who hast been an Incourager and Abetter of Strife,

2 Sam 25. 23.

Num. 16. 26.

Strife, by joyning thy self to the Churches adversaries? O why shouldst thou, if thou beest truly Pious, truly Loyal, bring that Trouble and Disquiet upon thy Conscience, as thy wavering betwixt the Church and Schism must needs in time procure thee. It thou art for the Church hold thee there. If thy feet stand in the Gates of Jerusalem, what need of Dan and Bethel? if thou lovest Gods House and the publick Congregation, what hast thou to do with private Meetings and unlawful Assemblies? if the daughter of Sion affect thee, why dost thou resort to the Tents of Kedar?

Say rather as old Jacob said of his two Sons; *O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united; for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall.*

Such a Man, so excellent a Prince, so gracious a Governor as ever sat upon the British Throne, such a Wall of Government as we must never hope to see rebuilt and raised up again in our days.


4. Which is the last and saddest of all, thou doest indanger the Eternal safety of thy Soul. The Apostle, what ever may, by some, be thought of it, has rankt Schism amongst dangerous sins; and well he might, for it cuts off a man from the Communion of the Church; and, which is the worst kind of Excommunication, a man thus Excommunicates himself; and how slightly soever people may think of that Church-censure, our Saviour teaches otherwise, who makes it one of the severe instances of Persecution that they should cast them out of their Synagogues. As to that Author, who calls it a *Theological scar-crow*, he might as well have called any other sin, nay Hell it self, a *scar-crow*. For sure there is such a sin as *schism*. And schism is given to *change*, first, what it finds settled, and afterwards to change again, and break it self into other subdivisions; whilst one *set* sets up upon the back of another, and both ground their confidences upon the ruines of the establish'd Church.

Joh. 16. 2

To fold up all; since 'tis so perillous both to Our selves and to the Publick, to have any thing to do with those, who, by their Principles and Practices, have shewn themselves given to *change*; since such an association and tampering with discontented Politicians and religious Discenters is a shrewd Evidence of our falling off from the fear we ought to have for God in his publick Worship, and from that honour we ow to the King in obeying those Laws, by which he is to govern us; since, I say, 'tis a shrewd Indication of our failing in our duties both to God and the King, both to Religion and Community; and since, as 'tis threaten'd in the next verse to the Text, that *the calamity of such persons shall rise up suddenly*, by a secret hand and unexpected providences, *and who knows the ruine of them both?* both politick and religious Male-contents, both Rebels and Schismatics, both of the persons themselves that are given to *change*, and of those persons that meddle with them. Since it is so, let us take heed to our selves, and establish our Spirits in the fear of the Lord and the King, and as we wish well to our own Persons and to our Posterities after us; Let us have nothing to do with these Changers; But if we are indeed true children of the Church, and loyal Subjects to our Sovereign, let us hold fast to our Establishments, and desire of God, that he will settle us in Righteousness and true Holiness; that he will guide us with a Spirit of Truth and Peace; and that he will unite our hearts in his fear and mutual love, to the Welfare and good success of all our religious and civil Concerns; that he will graciously preserve our King, whom he hath

so wonderfully, as on this day, brought into the World, and set upon the Throne of his Fathers; that he would guard him with his holy Angels, and make him as an Angel of God, to discern betwixt good and evil, to encourage Well-doers, and to discountenance Vice, to execute Justice, and to maintain Truth amongst us; and that he will give unto all his Subjects his Grace, so to walk before Him and his Anointed in all Godly fear and dutiful obedience; that his Blessings may attend us all the days of our lives, that we may see no *Change*, as long as we live, but that Peace may continue still on our *Israel*. Which God of his mercy grant, &c. *Amen.*

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EIGHT  
SERMONS

Preached upon

Solemn Occasions.

V I Z.

- I. At St. *Maries* HOSPITAL.
- II. At the Consecration of CHRIST-CHURCH  
in *Southwark*.
- III. At the Consecration of <sup>(Hall)</sup>JOHN Lord Bishop of  
OXFORD.
- IV. At the Reading of Sir *Francis Winnington* of the  
*Middle Temple*.
- V. At the Reading of *Thomas Walcot* Esq; of the  
*Inner Temple*.
- VI. At a Meeting of the *Clergy* at *Aſton* by Appoint-  
ment of the Lord Bishop of *London*. — *Hon: & Res: Hon: Compton (D.D.)*
- VII. Upon the Discovery of the late horrid *Popish*  
PLOT.
- VIII. Upon the FAST-day kept *Novemb. 13.*

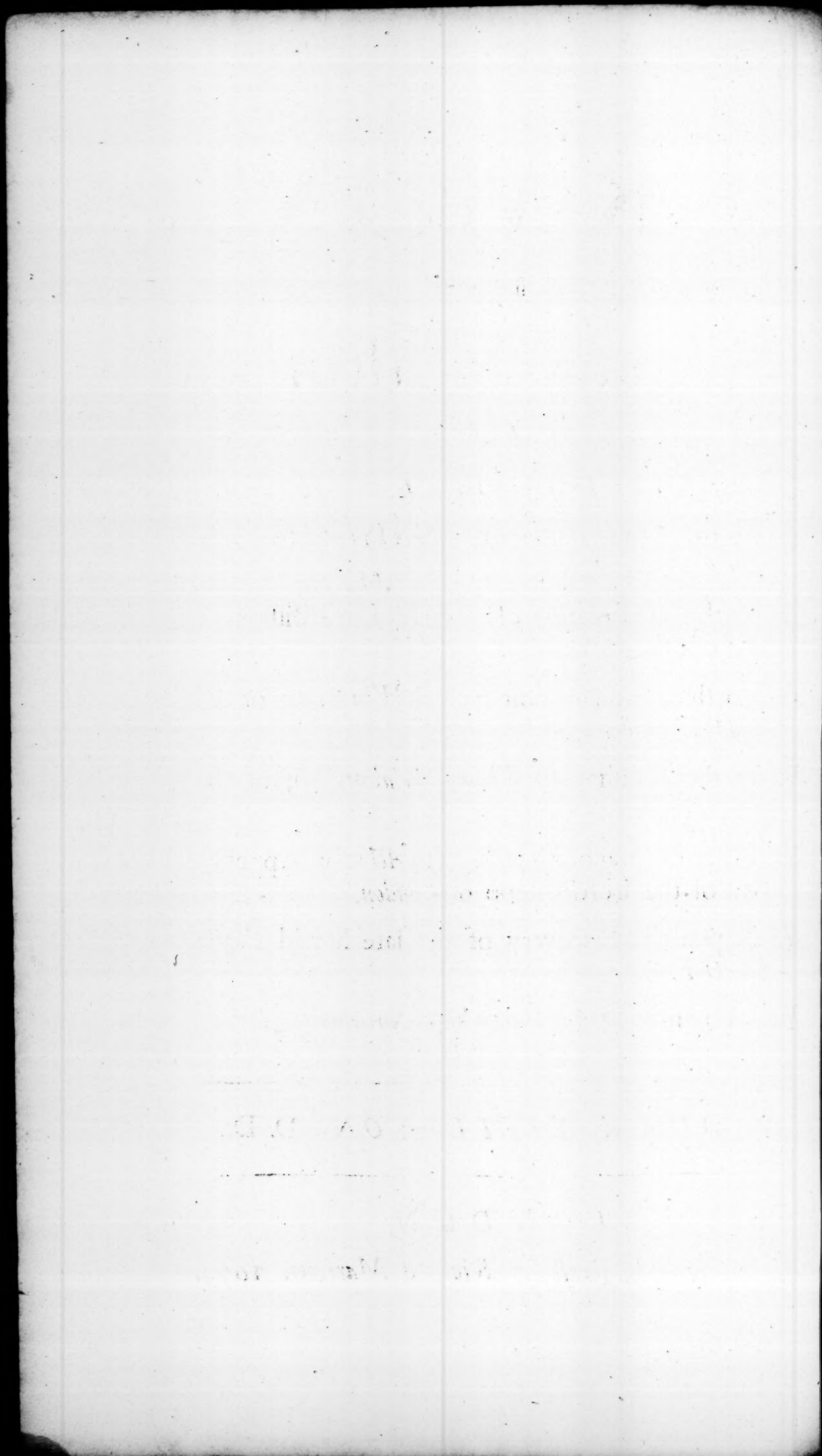
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By ADAM LITTLETON D. D.

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L O N D O N,

Printed by S. Roycroft for Richard Marriott. 1679.



## The Charitable Publican.

A Sermon Preached at St. Maries Hospital, on  
Easter-Wednesday, 1674.

S. Luke XIX. 8.

*And Zacheus stood and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold.*

Or, as we read the Verse in the *Offertory*, with a little more plainness.

*Zacheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have wronged any man, I restore him fourfold.*



Instead of discoursing over the Common Place of *Charity*, and saying all that may be said in a general Commendation of that, I know not whether more Excellent or more Necessary *Vertue* to all, that wear the name of Christians: instead of doing This, which would be but *Actum agere*, to tire you with a nauseous repetition of what has been so often said already, and much better then I can do it, by others my *learned Brethren* upon the like Occasion; I have chosen an eminent *Example* in this kind to lay before you; such an one, as, setting aside his Employment, I must in *charity* suppose you all to be, (for I would not offend against a *Duty*, I come hither to perswade.)

He was a *Rich* man, and a *Just* man too; for so his *Name* bespeaks him. זכאי *Zachai* in the *Syriack* language signifies *Pure* and *Righteous*; and so we may gather from the bold challenge he makes, that if he had wrong'd any man, he was content to undergo the Penalty of a common Thief in some cases, and make a *fourfold Restitution*.

2 Sam. 12. 6.



Behold then what this Honest and Wealthy person *does*; take notice what he *says*; who immediately upon his Conversion to the Faith, at the very first Conference he had with the *Messias*, as if *Charity* were the Sum of *Christianity*, and there were no other way of manifesting and making known his *Faith*, no more evictive Demonstration of a sincere Belief, then by *Liberality* to the Poor; breaks out into such a generous and frank *Profession*, as may serve to shame the *Most*, and to encourage us *All* to Bounties of this nature.

*Zacheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have wrong'd any man, I restore him fourfold.*

In which words we have to observe

1. The Person; *Zacheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord.*
2. The Profession he makes; *Behold, Lord, the half of my goods, &c.*

As to the *Person*, we must crave leave to give you some brief account of his *Character*, and of the *Occasion* of his making this solemn Profession.

In the *Profession* it self are these two Parts:

1. A signal *Engagement* of an unwonted Charity. *Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor.*
2. A penitent *Acknowledgment* of any Injuries or Wrongs, he might have been guilty of, as was usual, in the discharge of his Employment, together with an humble Submission to the most rigorous terms of satisfaction, and making amends for any such wrongs done by him; *and if I have wronged any man, I restore him fourfold.* So some *Interpreters* understand it.

Or, as I am rather willing to infer from the very purport and order of the words, and which I shall by and by endeavour to make out; It is a *Protestation* of his Integrity and Uprightness, either in the performance of his Office of *Publican*, or in the getting of his Estate whatever it was; and so a *Challenge* to any that might pretend themselves injured by him: as much as to say; If, as a *Publican*, *I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation*; or if, as a Rich man, *I have wrong'd any man by oppression or fraud*, (as I do not know that I have wittingly and willingly done) here I am ready to make him double and treble, nay *fourfold* amends.

The words of his *Profession* do thus naturally and easily fall into these two Parts; but I shall desire to handle them in another way, as may be more useful to our present purpose; by considering

1. A great *Duty* of Christianity here implied, and that is *Charity*; which *Zacheus* here makes to be the very Declaration of his *Faith* in the Holy *Jesus*: for this is all we meet with from him upon his entertainment of his heavenly Guest, and upon this very saying of his, our Saviour pronounces in the very next verse of him, that *this day Salvation was come to his House, inasmuch as he was now become the Son of Abraham*; which plainly shews, that this *Charity* of his was accepted as a true Evidence of a saving *Faith* in him.

2. The *Qualifications* of this Duty, as they are here expressly set down, and those *Four*; which will serve for *Rules* and *Directions*, how and in what manner we ought all to bestow our Charity.

1. That

1. That it be *Liberal* and Bountiful. The *half* of his Estate.
2. That it be *Righteous* and founded upon Justice, that we do it without any ones injury; or at least, that we first take care to make *Restitution* to those we may have injur'd.
3. That it be *Speedy*, without delay, presently put in Execution; *Behold, I give.*
4. That it be *Exemplary*, to God's glory and others Incouragement. He stood forth and said, Behold, &c.

I. For the *Person*; that he was a *Publican*, I hope no Christian will take any prejudice against his *Charity* from his *Office*; since as odious as that was among the People of the *Jews*, as contemptible as the *persons* were, that executed it, even to the infamy of a *Proverb*, which joyn'd *Publicans* and *Sinners* together, and ranked them (though sometimes of their own Nation) with *Heathens*, insomuch that it was unlawful by their Law to eat and drink or have any Converse with them; and they made that one of their greatest Exceptions and most heinous Charges against our *Saviour*, that he disdain'd not the Company and Invitation of this sort of men, as we find here *verse 7.* and in the *5th Chapter, ver. 30.* in the case of *Matthew*, whom *Christ* called from his Toll-booth to the supream Church-Dignity, of being one of his blessed *Apostles*: yet, to pass by these particular Instances, our Saviour has in general affirmed the case of a *penitent Publican*, however unjust he may have been, to be much better then that of a *proud Pharisee*, what righteousness soever he may pretend to, as to Justification; and that the ones *Lord have mercy upon me a sinner* will meet with a more gracious Acceptance at God's hands, then the others *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are*, is likely to do.

Matth. 9. 10.  
Matth. 18. 17.

Luke 18. 14.

We have little reason then any of us to be startled at our New-Convert upon this score.

We are told in the *second verse*, that he was *Rich*; and that he came fairly by his Wealth, we intimated before, and shall now further make it out, thus from the very verse, where we are inform'd, that he was not an ordinary *Publican*, but a *Chief* and President among that Order of men. For the *Romans*, having made such considerable Conquests over most parts of the world, the better to secure their publick Revenue, which they used to drain from the several Countries they had made themselves Masters of by their Victorious Arms; did in each Province set up a *Fraternity* or Society of these Officers, whether of their own People or of the Natives of the Countrey, to gather the Tributes and return them into the Chequer at Rome. Those were call'd *παραβολαι Publicans*, that is, *Redemptores Vectigalium*, Farmers of the *Customs*; and in each of these Societies there was one that was the Prime Undertaker, the *Surintendent of the Finances*, styled in the *Greek Testament* *Ἀρχιπαραβόλης*, the *Chief of the Publicans*, which is *Zachens* his Title here, and in some Authors is named *Ἀλαβάρχης*, *Scripturae tributi Præfectus*, the Auditor and Controller of these publick Accounts.

Now though the *underling Officers* of this kind were generally rude and vexatious to the People, by their Extortions and false Accusations and other unjust and corrupt Practices, and so did deservedly contract a publick *odium*; yet that they all were not such even in the inferior Rank, the Historian tells us of one, who had deserved so well in that Office, as *Suit.* to have a Statue set up to his Memory with this Inscription, *καλῶς παραβολαίης* To the honest *Publican*. And that the *Superiors* of them, especially if men

men of the same Countrey, as *Zacheus* was, needed not be such, is evident enough from the nature of the thing. For being a *Jew*, he would not certainly have been trusted with such an Employ, as this was, in his own Countrey of *Judea*, had not he had a sufficient Estate of his own, to have given Security to the Government, which employed him.

We may then very rationally deem him to have been a *Rich* man, whether by Patrimony, left so by his Friends, or by Merchandize or otherways of his own Acquitt, before he embarked in this Office; and then afterward, what by a large Salary, or by a good Bargain, if he undertook it a great, what by other honest Advantages he might make, of having the publick Moneys go thorough his hands, to have fairly improv'd and increas'd his Estate.

This as it may be probably supposed, so it must necessarily be granted upon this further Consideration, that had he acquired his Wealth by injurious and fraudulent means, he would by this frank Proffer of a *fourfold Restitution* in all likelihood have run his Charity into a *Premunire*, and made it liable to a *Statute of Bankrupt* for the Payment of just debts; and one part of the Verse would have spoil'd the other, when had he been an unjust Person, such a Restitution would have begger'd his Liberality, and left but little to be given to the Poor; or at least, had his Extortions been great, when half was bestow'd on the Poor, the other half would scarce have serv'd for a quadruple satisfaction.

This then we have gain'd by this Inspection, that not only that *half* of his Estate, he design'd for *Charity*, was well gotten; but that *three parts* of the other *moiety* must be so too, to make the proposed Amends, should he, after that Bequest and Restitution, have left himself nothing; which we have little reason to imagine any man would; nor are we about to perswade any one to be so charitable, as to be altogether improvident.

It is clear then from the words themselves, that there can be, in the most rigid Construction, but one *eighth part* of his whole Estate questionable; for do but again take notice, how he speaks, *The half I give to the Poor*. That is absolute, and if *I have wrong'd any man*. That is but conditional. What then? *I restore him fourfold*: and how could that be, if *three parts* at least (as I said) of this remaining half had not been truly and justly his own? and then if so, when this had been done, he would have had nothing left for himself, and must have been fain for his future Subsistence to have listed himself in the number of his own Almsmen.

Wherefore I do take the Words to be rather a *Challenge* of any that should pretend themselves wrong'd by him, then a *Confession* (as some would have it) that he had wrong'd any one.

Thus I have presumed, though but a sorry *Accountant*, to audit and state the accounts of our good *Publican*, and to give in the Particulars and true Value of his Estate. This to acquit his *Justice*, which was one and the best part of his Character. That was the first thing to be spoken to, in reference to his *Person*.

The next is the *Occasion*, which gradually led him along to this generous Resolution and frank Profession.

Our Saviour in his last Journey he made to *Jerusalem*, being to pass through *Jericho*, a City in Fame and Wealth, the next of all the Holy Land to the *Metropolis*; and for distance of place but a matter of twenty miles off; *Zacheus*, the Master of the Tributes, having his Residence



dence there, was tempted with a holy Curiosity, (for so it prov'd in the event) to see that blessed Person, of whom he had heard so much discourse and so great a Fame: A *Curiosity* I call'd it, because possibly he meant no more then the bare Satisfaction of seeing him *en passant*; though (blessed sight!) his *Seeing*, as we say, was *Believing*.

His *little Stature* was a great Prejudice to his ambitious Design; such was the Throng about the holy *Jesus*, who made *Churches* or *Hospitals*; wherever he came, vast Multitudes flocking about him in all places, either to hear his Heavenly *Doctrine*, or to be heal'd by his Miraculous *Cures*; that this little Great man, this poor Rich man, had he engag'd himself, would have been lost in the Crowd, nor could any respect to his Place or to his *Wealth* have procur'd him admittance, or made him way through the Confluence of the People, who were all equally possess'd with an Emulation of being as near the sacred Person of our Lord, as they could get.

What does he do? what he wants in Stature, he makes up in Wit; and trusts to his Brains, where he durst not venture his Shoulders. Knowing which way *Jesus* was to pass, he, as if he meant now to be his Fore-runner, and not only an idle Spectator, runs before, and to give himself the Advantage of standing, and withal to be free from the Disturbance of the Crowd, he advances into a Tree, as if it had been his Design, as the *Poet* tells us, those of the other Sex go to publick Meetings for, *to be seen as well as to see*. And so it happily fell out. Our Saviour, when he arrives at the place, looks up and spies him. And well he might; for he that could at distance see honest *Nathaniel* under the *Fig-tree*, could not miss seeing righteous *Zacheus* up in the *Sycamore*. Joh. 1. 48.

Nor was this all. This Interview was to beget an Acquaintance. *Christ* calls him down, and prevents his Civility by inviting himself. Though he made great haste to get up, for *he ran* for it; yet he made greater haste to come down. Nor was there any danger in that haste, which express'd the readiness of his Obedience to so gracious a Call. Let the rest of the standers by, that saw it, be as dissatisfied as they will at this sudden and unexpected Familiarity, and grumble at our Lord, that he would make himself the Guest of a *Sinner*; the *Sinner*, as he had great reason, entertains him with Joy; for at the same time he receives Salvation into his House to boot. *This day*, says *Jesus* to him, *is Salvation come to this House*. Verse 9.

Well! but is *Salvation* to be had at so cheap a Rate? No. The worldling will say, it was a costly Entertainment; when it stood him in no less then *half* of all his worldly goods. But *Zacheus* did not, nor will any pious man ever think, that *Heaven* and everlasting Happiness can be purchased at too dear a Price.

What shall we say? what can we think of it? Some *Mathematicians* tell us of pulling up well-grown Oaks with a Horse-hair, and such like wonderful Performances by the slight of *Mechanick Science*. Blessed Lord! how ought we to admire the wonderful *Arts* and stupendious *Methods* of thy *Love*, who canst thus from such unlikely Occasions produce such blessed and saving Advantages? who doest thus sometimes from the otherwise loose and unsteady Affections of men contrive Opportunities for thy *Grace*, to be usher'd in by secret and unthought off *Providences*? and from the surprize of a transient glance, fix the beam of thy Countenance, and raise the Soul from unconcerned Admirations of thee to holy Resolves and firm lasting Purposes of a Divine Charity? This is an excellent Theme, but I must not insist upon it.

Upon

Upon this free Resignation of *That*, which some perhaps value more than their most beloved Relations, his *Wealth* I mean, Christ intitles him a *Son of Abraham*, and gives him an Interest in all the Promises made to the Father of the Faithful.

And this is that which is the Ground of that we intended our *next* Head of Discourse, that this Liberality of *Zacheus* to the Poor, upon his reception of Christ, was an evident Sign of his sincere Conversion, and an infallible Character of his genuine *Faith*; which tacitly insinuates the high *Obligation*, which lies upon all Christians to the Exercise of *Charity*, and that no man can truly call himself *Christian*, who does not in some fair degree and handsome proportions practise this Christian virtue.

And herein we propos'd *first* to treat of the *Duty* it self, as to its *Obligation*; and then to lay down some *Directions* for it, as they may be here gathered from its *Qualifications* in *Zacheus* his Instance.

1. *First* then, as to our *Obligation* to the Practise of *Charity*, I gather it into this plain Proposition; That *charitable and righteous Actions*, such as *Zacheus's* here were, *are the fairest Evidences of Grace at present in any Christian, and the best Assurances of Glory in Expectance; That the charitable Christian is the truly Godly and consequently the Blessed man.* And this made good out of the very Context. For so our Saviour accepts of *Zacheus* his Profession. He owns him as a *Son of Abraham*: there is the *Evidence* of his *Grace*, that he was a true *Believer*; and he tells him that *Salvation was come to his House*; there's his *Assurance of Glory*, that he was to be a *Blessed Saint*.

This Proposition we design'd to prove at large, *partly* by some *common Arguments*, which as in the general they prove all Piety to consist in Practise, so being particularly applied to works of Charity do more convincingly inforce it; *partly* by some that are more *peculiar to Charity*, as it stands in Contradistinction to *Piety* strictly so call'd, and *Sobriety*, that is, the Duties we owe to God and to our selves.

The *common Arguments* are taken.

1. From the *Subject of Religion*; the Heart or Mind and Soul of man; that *Charitable actions* are the best Expressers of the *Mind*, and the shrewdest Discoveries of the *Heart*. Now the Heart in matters of Religion is all in all; so that our *Piety*, if it be not conversant in Works of *Charity*, it may very well be suspected, it is not hearty, 'tis not real, but a meer formality of Hypocrisie.

2. From the *Nature of the Covenant* betwixt God and us, that *Charitable actions* are the *Condition* on our part, by which we must work out our own Salvation. It must be a *Faith working by Love*; and 'twas to this very end that Christ died, as to seal the Covenant, so to *purchase to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works*; and those, to be sure, Works of Charity.

3. From the *Manner of Procedure* at the great day of Accounts, when eternal Retributions shall be adjusted to men according to their Works; and *David* speaks it as a Remark of divine *Mercy* as well as *Justice*, that he shall judge every man so; and the chiefeft and indeed only Works there, that will intitle men to Reward, will be the Works of *Charity*, as our Saviour himself, who best knew, has given the account in that famous and convincing passage, *Matth. 25. from verse 31. to the end.*

Gal. 5. 6.

Tit. 2. 14.

Psal. 62. 12.

The other Reasons, which do more *peculiarly* belong to *Charitable* actions, as they are distinguished from acts of *Piety* and *Sobriety*, may be likewise three.

1. That they flow from a more generous Principle of *Faith*.
2. That they are in their nature and appearance more *Godlike*.
3. That in their Consequents and Effects they are more *Beneficial* and advantageous to the Publick, they tend more to the good of Mankind.

These *Arguments* I had thought to have enlarged upon, but fearing least by wearying your *Patience* I might disoblige your *Charity*, I thought fit to wave that Design, and only name them, and so leave them to your Christian Consideration.

To these I meant to have subjoyn'd one *Topick* more, which may be of some force with sensual and worldly Minds, that will not be much mov'd perhaps with Considerations drawn from *Christianity*.

Let me ask the *Worldlings*, What is the great Business that they imploy themselves and their thoughts about in this World? It is, they will say, in their Hearts, to get good Estates. They mean sure *great* Estates. But the *Philosopher* hath answered for me, *ἐν ἐν τῷ μεγάλῳ τὸ ἔν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ ἔν τὸ μικρόν*. *What's Great is not therefore Good; but what's Good is alway by Consequence Great*. Let me tell them, that the *Good Estate* is the only *Great Estate*: and there's no Estate can be good, that is *Uncharitable*; for, besides that it will bring them into a sad and miserable State hereafter, as ye have heard; it will fail them even in their temporal Concerns here, to their Persons and to their Posterities after them. For a good Estate is a *clear* and *sure* Estate, which without *Charity* none can be. It is *Charity* which *sanctifies* and *secures* Estates; *sanctifies* them to the Owners persons, and *secures* them to their Posterities.

1. It makes a *clear Estate*, and gives a man a true Title and Propriety to what he enjoys. What a *Charitable* man gets at the years end, he has *de claro*. His Incoms and Possessions are clearly his own, and are attended with God's blessing, and are rendred Comfortable in the Injoyment. After he has made a just Defalcation of *God's Right*, of what belongs to the *Church*, of what may be spar'd for the *Poor*; the Residue he may properly call his own: and it is *Propriety*, which gives the true Relish to all we enjoy. As the Payment of the *first Fruits* gave virtue to the Remainder; so the Good man by consecrating just Proportions of his wealth to God's service, *sanctifies* the rest to his own use: whilst the *Uncharitable* are but *Usurpers*, who, in respect of God, have no true Title to what they have, nor any Promise to thrive with it.

Luxurious *Prodigals*, disabling their Charity by their Lust, may be said to eat the Poores bread out of their mouths, and to drink Widows and Orphans tears, to devour sacred things, and with *Belshazzar* to quaff in the bowls of the Sanctuary; and thus they tempt God to destroy both the Meat and the Belly, which so unworthily they make his Rival: And on the other hand, *Covetous* Wretches by denying God his due, miss their own too: so just is he in making their sin their punishment, not giving them the Heart to enjoy what they toil for, so that they want even what they have, and live poor for the sorry Reputation of dying Rich; though many times instead of being honour'd or well spoken of, they are laught at for their pains, and *Fool* writ upon their Tomb-stone. *Miserable* people! as we well term them, in this Life; and infinitely and eternally miserable after; as if they had design'd all their carking cares and drudging



toils only to this end to be Pack-horses of their Estates, which at Death they must unload to the expecting Heir, and of which themselves had never any Comfort in this Life, nor like to have in the next through their want of Charity; nay, which is for ever deplorable, as if (poor souls!) they had, by some sad decree of their own Contrivance, damned themselves in both Worlds.

2. It makes an Estate *sure and durable*. For that which is charitably bestowed, is put out of the reach of Fortune.

Matth.

*Extra fortunam est, quicquid donatur:*

Matth. 6. 20. what is laid out thus, is laid up, and in a sure place, where no Thieves can break thorough and steal. *Charity* preserves Wealth from the moth of a guilty Conscience, and the *rust* which naturally grows out of it, from its own intrinsick Corruption; and it secures it also from the Depredation of all outward Violence.

Nor this alone; it *improves* as well as *secures*. Not to speak of the vast Harvest of heavenly Retributions in the other Life, with which earthly Minds are not much affected; there are large Returns even here allured to the Liberal. *He that giveth to the Poor, lendeth to the Lord; and he will surely repay.* 'Tis putting money into the Bank, lodg'd in the safest hands, and upon the highest Consideration, no less, as our Sa-

Prov. 19. 17. viour computes it, then a *hundred fold*, which is *decies mille per cent.* that is, a hundred for one. We have a thrifty saying, *A penny sav'd is two pence got*; but here it is as true, though it may seem a Paradox, *A penny given is a hundred got.*

Matth. 19. 29. This sure must be the best way of Merchandize. *Cast thy bread upon the waters*, says the Wiseman, *and thou shalt find it after many days.* His meaning is, as I take it, that we should do, as *Merchant-Venturers* do; who commit their Estates to the Sea upon hopes of Advantage. Who that is truly wise even for this World, would not for such *Gain*, upon such *Insurance*, venture almost all he has in the bottom of *Charity*? So far is it from wasting a man's stock, that it strangely increases it.

Cedren.

There's a story, a *Greek* Author tells us, of a rich *Jew*, who having read the large Promises made to the *Charitable*, did for Experiment part with all upon that account, and reduced himself to that extream Poverty, that finding his Expectations of God's engaged Kindness fail, he grew into a high Discontent, and resolv'd to expostulate the case with the *High-Priest* at *Jerusalem*, why he should be thus deceived? In the way, as he came near the City, he meets with a valuable Prize, a rare Jewel of great worth, which he gladly takes up, and begins now to be reconcil'd to God again for this his good Fortune. Consulting some *Lapidaries*, he is inform'd it was very like a *Stone*, that belonged to the *High-Priest's Breast-plate*, which had been lately lost; and if he carried it thither, he would not miss of a considerable Reward. Away he goes to him, and receives of him such a sum of Money, as made him fair amends for his former Disbursements. But withal the *High-Priest* had somewhat more to say to him, ere he dismiss him. He gives him a good wherret on the ear, and bids him remember to trust God another time. *Ab!* how loath worldly men are to trust God? But if they will not trust God with their *Wealth*, whom will they trust their *Souls* with? nay, whom will they trust their *Children* and *Families* with, for whom they scrape together

together this Wealth? For as this was to shew that what is thus expended is not lost, so the remainder, the surplage and overplus of Estate, which is reserv'd for *Posterity*, is preserved by Charity.

It is not the good man's *Memory* alone, but his *Family* too shall flourish after him. There is a Blessing intailed upon the Estate, to be inherited by many succeeding Generations. God, we are told in the *second Commandment*, visits sin but to the *third and fourth Generation*; but he shews Mercy to *Thousands*; and who are those he uses to shew Mercy to, but the Merciful? *Blessed are the Merciful; for they shall obtain Mercy.* Matth. 5. 7. O blessed Parents, who are thus merciful! and blessed Children, who descend from such Parents!

It is *David's* Observation, and he had been making it all his life time; *I have been young, says he, and now am old; yet never saw I the Righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.* Psal. 37. 25. How? That's not literally true, may some one say. It is a thing we may every day see, Good mens Children come to want. A Reverend Interpreter supplies it thus; *nor his seed, though begging their bread*; that is, though some such are sometimes put to hard shifts, yet they are not utterly forlorn or forsaken of God, but in time, some way or other, are provided for Necessaries. A pious sense; yet I think that Supplement needless. The style of the *Psalms* confirms my Opinion, which delighting much in *Synonyma's*, usually makes the later part of the Verse answer the former to the same sense in different Expressions: *I never saw the Righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread.* How begging their bread? Though they may be driven to seek it, yet they are so preserv'd by God's Providence or his Grace, that they are never forced to desperate or scandalous Courses for a livelihood. That I take to be the Importance of the *Hebrew* word *שפ*, which we here render by *begging*.

Let me now again ask the Worldlings, as I did before, *What* they labour for? so now, *Whom* they labour for? Is it for *Strangers*? Many do so, as the *Psalmist* says, *they heap up Riches, and know not who shall gather them,* Psal. 39. 6. moil and toil for those will never thank them. Is it for their *Children*? That is the common Pretence. Their *Charity* is the only way to make their Children happy, in leaving them a lasting Estate: whereas the miserly Hoarder, as alive he inherits the Curses of the People, so at his Death leaves all behind him, either to a spendthrift Heir, who will quickly squander that away with the Fork, which his wretched Sire with great care and pains got together with the Rake; or to some wrangling Executors, who tear the Estate to pieces in Law-suits.

And here I had purpos'd to answer at large some *Objections*, which are commonly made against Charities in general. I do not mean trifling Exceptions, but those which seem to carry some weight with them. And those are principally two.

1. One rais'd from the *Alienation*, which has been of great *Charities*, given to the *Church* and the *Poor*, never to be recovered, and from those *Abuses* and Corruptions, which are sometimes practis'd by Trustees in the distribution and management of such Charities.

2. The other from the Suspicion of Merit, that these works of Charity are by the *Papists* lookt upon as the Causes of a man's Justification.

For the *former* there's no fear in our case, as long as *London* lasts.

For the *later*, it is so fond a scruple, that it is unworthy of any sober Christian. We do not dispute the *Necessity of good Works*; so as to countenance a *Merit*; nor ought any one to use such Arguments for the disproving *Merit*, as may seem to throw off the *Necessity of good Works*. For that is not so much to manage the Controversie against *Papists*, as against all Religion: and I could wish that were all the Difference betwixt them and us; and if they get the better of us at this weapon, it will be our shame; and no discredit to them.

Far be it then from any true *Protestant* to think, that *Good Works* favour of *Popery*; we should rather strive to out-do them, then to reproach them upon that account. There's no man is justified for his good Works, but there is no man shall be justified without them; if God put it into his power to do them, and he neglect.

Having thus, as well as we might, acquitted our selves in shewing the *Necessity and Obligation of the Duty of Charity*; we come now to the *Directions of it in the Practise*, as we find the Characters of it in *Zacheus* his Instance.

- III. 1. It was very *liberal*; no less then the *half* of his Goods. He was content that God should go shares with him in his Estate. He acknowledg'd the whole God's gift, and thought it but a proportionable Gratitude, to return him at least one *Moiety* back again. Nor did he conceive himself a looser by the Bargain. *Half* would well serve his turn, and with God's blessing might prove, according to the *Greek Proverb*, *more then the Whole*. One half his *Charity* secur'd to him; and he knew God's *Providence* would secure the other.

But this may seem to some *durus sermo*, a hard saying, should I go about to press home this Example. This action of *Zacheus* appears to be somewhat a kin to that Advice our Saviour gave to the rich Young man, which was rather a *Counsel of Perfection* then a *Precept of Duty*: *Sell all thou hast and give it to the poor*.

Mark 10.21.

Well! *primitive Christians* did that too, and made a common stock for the *Church* and the *Poor* out of their Possessions; of which the *Apostles* were appointed their Trustees: and we know what befell *Ananias* and *Sapphira* for their dissembling and double dealing in that affair.

Acts 4.34,35.

Acts 5.5,10.

I, but those *primitive Christians* were extraordinary Persons, and then there were extraordinary Occasions. Their *Piety* indeed and *Charity* were extraordinary; but for ought we know, *Occasions* amongst us may sometimes be as great and as urgent. Well! but if *half* an Estate be too much; what say you to a *third*, a *fourth*, a *fifth* or a *sixth* part? what to the *hundredth* or *two hundredth* peny? But alas! I must not stand to higgel with you thus, and to beat down the Market.

It must be left to your Charitable selves, what *rate* you will assess your selves at. Let every man do as God shall put it into his *Heart* to do; it were to be wish'd as God has put in his *Hand* to do. For God expects, where he has sown plentifully, to reap plentifully; and so must you expect too. So the *Apostle* tells you downright, and so you have heard before, that it is your *Charity* will adjust your Rewards. Your eternal *Harvest* will be proportionable to your *seed-time* in this life. He that has been sparing of his seed, must not look for large Crops. I shall not undertake to determine the *Quota*, what proportion of every man's Estate will serve the turn.

2 Cor. 9.6,7.



A man may do *too little*, to be sure; and too too many do so. One cannot well do *too much*, if he do it with pious Intentions and to a good end; and it is good however to err on the right hand; and this is a work of the right hand. So Christ says; *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand does*, that is, let not thy carnal worldly Reason be of Counsel to thy deeds of Charity. Matth. 6. 3.

Again, the more any man's *Talents* are, the greater his *Account* will be, and the larger improvement he is to make. And the way to improve his Talent is to lay it out, and not hide it in the ground.

Money in the *Greek* is called *χρήματα*, a thing for *Use*; and with us Wealth goes by the name of *Means*; and it deserves its name only then, when being rightly used, it makes the Owners rich in good Works, and proves the happy Means to them of attaining their great end, the Glory of God and the Salvation of their own Souls; neither of which two is more promoted by any one single Instance of our Services, or by all put together, then by Charity.

Before I end this, let me observe to you, that the *Jews* were by their Law obliged to give a *tenth* part every year to the *Priest*, and besides that every third year a *tenth* to the *Poor*, and this no piece of their *Ceremonial Law*, that we may think our selves excus'd. And it was a Law too set to them, as that of *Divorces* for the hardness of their Hearts. Had it not been a *Law*, many would not have done that; though the pious ones among them would not be stinted by this Law, but constantly outdid it. The very *Rabbins* upon that passage of the *Talmud*, where 'tis said, *Exhibitioni misericordiae non est stata mensura*; have brought it up to the *fifth* part of ones estate in money: no one (say they) being bound to give to the *Poor* beyond that, unless he do it upon extraordinary Devotion, במסד חסדות.

Rambam in loc.

The upshot of this is, that certainly we *Christians* (if we mind the Purport of all Christ's doctrine) cannot but acknowledge our selves under stricter Obligations in this kind, then the *Jews* were; and it will be a shame and confusion to us to let them; nay, those that were reputed the worst sort of them, to go before us into the Kingdom of Heaven upon the account of that *Righteousness*, wherein our Saviour tells us, that if we do not exceed the very best of them, we shall be kept out; and that by that *Righteousness* is meant *Almsdoing* is apparent from Scripture-use of the word, and from the drift of the place it self. Matth. 5. 20. צדקה

O how will Rich men, that profess *Christ* and own his Religion, look at the last, when they are call'd to account of their Charitable acts and good Deeds? how must they needs be confounded, when they shall see themselves come so far short of *Zacheus* the Publican, and of the ordinary *Jews*?

But that I may not only speak to the *Rich*, let me make an *Observe*, which will reach us all. Our *Saviour* came with the greatest Design of *Charity* as was imaginable; he came to *procure* it from his Father by his *Merit*, to *teach* it us in his *Doctrine*, and to *practise* it himself in his *Example*; for he went about continually doing good. And how did he come? in the poorest and meanest Condition in the world. Why thus? To shew by his own Example, that there is none so deprest in quality, so distressed in Fortune, but may one way or other be charitable and beneficial to Society. I mean those, whom God has blest with *Health* and *Strength* and *Understanding*, and indued with any measure of *Grace*, to make right use of these Advantages. Acts 10. 38.

Could

Could we that pretend our selves *poor*, but be taught to retrench our Lusts, to imploy our Industry, we might spare for the relief of others out of our superfluities. From those that have but little, God expects but little; but he expects it, and will accept it too; as we find by the

Mark 12.42.

*Widows two mites.*

Charity is as *Catholick* and Universal as the *Church* is, and belongs to every true Christian: only the *Rich* have the advantage of the *Poor* in this, that they *can* give more, and as they *can* they *must*; and it is to their advantage too, that there are *Poor* for the good imployment of their *Wealth*; which the more they imploy that way, they will find themselves ne're the less *rich* here, but much the more *happy* hereafter.

I have dwelt the longer upon this, because 'tis a main part of my Text; I shall make the quicker dispatch in the rest.

2. Our Charity must be *Just* and grounded upon Righteousness. *If I have wrong'd any one by violence or deceit, I restore him four-fold.*

To do good and to distribute forget not; for with such *Sacrifices* God is well pleased; Heb. 13. 16. Charity is the Christian *Sacrifice*, and it must be *without blemish*: else 'tis no more then the cutting off a Dog's neck, or the offering of the price of a Whore, an abomination. It is like morgaging anew an Estate, which was preingag'd, as some ill Debtors, they say, for want of a Register, use to do. It is to give that which is none of our own. It is like *Cæsar's* being liberal after a plunder; with the *Pharisees* to swallow Widows houses first, and then disgorge a Pittance of Alms to the poor Orphans; as if they meant to compound with God for oppression and couzenage with a pretended Charity, and sanctifie rapine by Alms.

Luke 16.9.

The word which we render *Almsgiving*, did in the language which our Saviour spoke, signifies *Righteousness*, *צדקה*. However Riches at best are but the *Mammon of Unrighteousness*, and Money, though never so well gotten, foils the fingers in the telling, which must be wash'd off by Charity; and for People of great dealings it is hard to avoid, but there will be some alloy and base mettle mixed with their *Wealth*, and perhaps as hard it may be to know directly where to make their Restitution: and in that case it may suffice to throw it into the *Corban* or the *Poor's Box*; and even this may be accounted one way of making them Friends of their unrighteous *Mammon*.

John 13. 27.

3. It must be *speedy*, out of hand. *Behold, I give, &c.* 'Tis the Apostles advice, *While we have time, let us do good*, Gal. 6. 10. We have no time but the present: *What thou doest, do quickly*, said our Saviour to *Judas*, in a proverbial form; which though design'd by Christ for a secret quip of his intended villany, yet was possibly according to common acception understood by the other Disciples of his giving somewhat to the *Poor*; he carrying the Bag, and being the Dispenser of his Masters bounty.

The right charitable man is not of the worldlings humour, who, if they design any good deeds, resolve to part with nothing till they die, and dare not trust God with what they have, till they find they can hold it no longer themselves; and then having plaid the *Dosons* all their lifetime, at last leave behind them *Testamentum porci*.

He is quite of another temper; he dares generously trust God for all and *with* all, and freely disposes of what he gives to the Givers praise: he thinks that bequeathing is but giving what one cannot keep, and therefore makes his own Eyes his *Overseers*, and his own Hands his *Executors* of what he would have done for Christ and his Church and his poor Members.

4. It must be *Exemplary*. He stood forth and said, Behold. 'Tis true, the *Trumpet* is not to be sounded, nor Praise of men to be sought; Matth. 6. 2. yet it is required of us, that our *good Works* should be so done, that *men* Matth. 5. 16. may see them, that is, not to that End, but in that Manner that men may see them, and glorifie not us, but our Father which is in Heaven.

And this to be done especially by Persons of publick place and authority, for the Glory of God, and the Incouragement of others, who are more prevail'd upon by their Superiours examples, then they are by all the Precepts and Instructions in the world.

I confels to be *singular* and affected in the Exercises of *Charity* looks too much like Ostentation and vain-glory; and therefore the safest way is to throw, what one has to give, into some common Bank; where, among a Multitude of other *Benefactors*, ones name is recorded, but not so as to give the charitable Person himself an occasion of being proud, or to any one else suspicion that he is so.

Somewhat like this was the *Gazophylacium silentum*; the Treasury of Baal Aruch in the silent ones in the Temple of *Jerusalem*, for secret Charities, for the שקט maintenance of poor Children.

And of this kind is that practice of Charity, which has been always observable in the *Honourable and Worshipful Governours and Patriots*, and others the worthy *Inhabitants* of this renowned City, and is now to be recommended to you from this paper.

### THE TRUE REPORT.

If these things be true, as are here reported, you must give me leave to speak. The great Charities of these *Hospitals*, who have here made their publick Complaint, are, to the Honour of your City, to the honour of your City did I say? I, to the *Safety* of it, and to the Preservation of your own *Families* too, intrusted into your Hands. Will you now, if these things be true, suffer those Charities to sink, to fall as they are, to decay and go to ruin? Pardon the plainness of my address.

My Lord, I know your Title is *Right Honourable*, your Brethren the *Aldermen* are *Right Worshipful*. But what is it makes you truly such? Is it your *Place*, do you think, is it your *Purple*, is it your *Wealth* makes you so? No; 'Tis your *Charity*, you owe your Honour to, and they their *Worship*. As your *Justice* keeps the *Sword* in your Hands, so it is your *Charity* keeps the *Cap of Maintenance* upon your Head.

You address your Paper here to the *Pious* and *Charitable*; where shall I find those Persons but amongst you your selves? Hitherto, in the former part of my Discourse, I have behav'd my self, I hope, like an *English Divine*. Now I must change the Scene, and from an *Orthodox Preacher* turn an earnest *Advocate* for your Poor, or if you will, a common *Begger*; and Modesty does not become Beggers, nor does the *Bashful* well act the *Advocate*.



I have been entertain'd by some *Clients*, your own People, to speak in their behalf. Some of them I have brought along with me; you may see them there, the *Blew-coat Boys*; whose *Blew*, if cherish'd, may in time turn into your *Purple* or into my *Black*, which all colours take. 'Tis *Wealth* makes *Aldermen*, as *Learning* does or should make *Divines*; and though every body cannot attain to Riches, yet Scholarship refuses none. These then are my *Clients* here present to vouch what I say for them.

Others I was fain to leave behind me under Custody, as not being able to come; the *Sick*, the *Wounded*, and the *Maim'd*; or at least not fit in their Condition to be ventured abroad, the *Franticks* and the *Vagrants*. Your Honour may send for them too if you please. They, as ill as they are, in their *Healths*, in their *Wits*, in their *Manners*, will own what I say, and speak their Complaints out lowder, then I can speak them.

You are the *Governours*, and ought to be the *Examples* of the *City*. Do *You*, as you think fit; I mean, as God shall incline you: and the rest of the *Citizens*, (I may undertake for them, I know they honour your Example so much) will do as they can, as God shall enable them. Your noble Minds govern your great Fortunes: We, that are of meaner Rank, must be content to have our Minds governed by our Fortunes.

I am loath to tire your Patience, but rather then fail in my trust, would condition with you to purchase the Ease of your *Patience* with the Bounty of your *Charity*. I have partly resolv'd not to give over, till I have made some handsome Impression. I must be faithful to *Tour Souls* as a *Divine*, and to my Poor *Clients* necessities as an Advocate. I am sensible you may grow weary of me; I crave your Forgiveness if I be any way offensive. 'Tis for *Tour* own sakes as well as for those *Orphans*, and those poor Creatures I even now mention'd, that I am thus earnest.

What would you have us to do? shall we come to your doors? shall we wander about the *City*, to see who will take us in? O let it not be said, that *Charity* her self should go a begging, and that those ancient and necessary Foundations of *Christ-Church*, *St. Bartholomew*, *St. Thomas*, *Bethlehem*, and *Bridewell* should send out their Nurseries among the People to shame the *Government* of the *City*, and to declare to the world, that *Charity* herself, for fear of being starv'd at home, should quit her Habitations, where she has so many years by your bountiful Cares, and by those before you, been hitherto maintain'd and preserv'd. Well! Let us come to some Composition at last. Let me but oblige your *Charity*, and I will release your *Trouble*.

Consider I pray in the first place these *Orphan Children* that are here upon the place; they are *your Children*, you are their Parents, you have adopted them for the *City Children*, and the Apostle says it, *he is worse then an Infidel that does not provide for his own*. The *Paper* says, *they are little more then half provided for*. See what they are; Think what they may be. Take notice their Number is great, the Charge of keeping them great, their Losses have been great. What remains, but that your *Charities* should be great, to answer all their great necessities?

1 Tim. 5.8.

They

They are now poor helpless things without your Assistance. They may one day prove Supporters and Ornaments of the City-Government, and pay back those Cares and Charges, which have been bestowed upon them.

Their *Angels* are always beholding the face of God their Heavenly Father. You are their *Guardians*. Be you those *Angels*. Matt. 18. 10.

King *Edward* provided for them by Land, as they themselves have exprest it in their Psalm of Thanksgiving: and King *Charles* has made Provision for them in Sea-affairs too. Let me intreat you, secure those Charities which are so advantageous to you in both Elements. Time will come, when they may be serviceable to you both at home and abroad; to fetch in Trade from other Countries, and to manage it here in their own.

I must repeat, what I told you but now, out of the *Paper*: you shall have it in the very words, as they are there set down. *The certain Revenue, &c.* Where is e're a *Zacheus* now amongst now, that will give us a moiety of his Estate, to supply this moiety?

Consider, I pray, again the poor *Seamen* and *Souldiers*, in the other two *Hospitals*; who have lost their Blood and their Limbs, and ventured their Lives in the publick Service. Let their groans and sighs upon their sick Couches move the Bowels of your Compassion. O pity their Wounds and Sufferings, which they poor men have undergone, whilst we staid at home in safety and quiet. O let them not fall like unregarded Victims, the Nations Sacrifices, but crutch up their impotent, shattered, and mangled Bodies with your Charity.

Great part of the Revenues of these two *Hospitals*, the greatest part of one, was consum'd by the late dreadful *Fire*. Let your *Charity*, I beseech you, be proportionable. God of his goodness has put an end to the *War*, and has blest us with a *Peace*. May it be a lasting one, say I; and may there never be occasion upon this account, of the *Wounded* and *Maimed* of troubling you any more! Let it be an argument for your Charity, that for some sorts of those poor People in those two places; This will, we hope, be the last time of asking your Relief.

Let me but in one word more stir up your Christian Compassion towards those poor *Vagabonds* and *Lunaticks*, who know not how to pity themselves. 'Tis a sad thing for any one in misery to be insensible of his Condition; good *Christians*, be you sensible of it; let them have the Charity of your *Prayers* and of your *Almsdeeds* both.

*Bridewell* has been doubly burnt down; in *London Fire* the great part of its Revenue consumed, and the remainder very near consum'd in the *Fire of Wapping*. They have spent their whole stock in rebuilding it, and have been fain, as other Builders do, to take up money at Interest for carrying on the work. The *City* does not, I am sure, intend to lay that Burthen of extraordinary Charge as well as of Care upon the *Governours* shoulders; she cannot do that in honour, but make good her own Trusts.

And then here's the other place, *Old Bethlehem*; the name signifies a *House of Bread*. For ought that I see, they can have neither *Bread* nor any thing else much longer; and the very *House* is dropping on their heads. Here's hardly *Bread* or *House* left. They tell us here, that the *Revenues* of it are so small, that they don't amount to one third part of the yearly Charge thereof. How is it possible they should long subsist at

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this

this rate? and that the old Structure is so *decayed*, that it cannot be taken down, and so *inconvenient*, that it must be built larger; and this too must be a matter of new charge beside the constant expence. How can this extraordinary Charge of *Building* be undertaken without your more then ordinary Contributions?

God be thanked, you have consulted the *Magnificence* of the *City* in your publick *Buildings*, and your own Conveniences in your private *Dwellings*; and the *City* is risen like a *Phanix* out of her ashes. May God preserve her from all ill accidents, till the last and general Conflagration! This, I say, has been your *Magnificence* of Building; and who does not highly commend you for it? Here's an Opportunity offer'd you now of building upon *Charity*. That as 'tis more commendable, so it will help to secure the rest. And you are the more obliged to exercise your *Charity*, because your works of *Piety*, your *Churches* I mean, are provided for to your hands.

I recommend all that has been said to God's *Grace* and to your *Prudence*; and cannot but hope a gracious and a blessed issue. Stay! what have I more to say? Shall I dismiss you now? I cannot, methinks yet. All this, may I fear, be forgotten, by that time you are got home and set down at Table. I pray, mistake me not. I do not dislike your *Feastings*, but do rather highly approve them as great Splendors of your *Government*, as handsome Advantages of keeping up Love and right Understanding in your several *Societies*: In a word, as useful Instruments and happy Opportunities of many singular *Benefactions*, of doing many great good things. Only let me request it of you, that you would make them *Gospel-Feasts*, and in your large Entertainments think of the *Poor*, and be no less liberal in your *Charities* to them, then you are in your other Expences; especially at such times as these.

Τὰ ἡμίση τῶν  
ὑπαρχόντων.

What think you of my *Zacheus*? He made such a Feast, as never any of you did in all your *Mayoralties*; never any of your Predecessors, if ye read over all *Fabian*. The Son of God was his Guest. And what did he? That, which I should be glad to see any one here do, the half of what he did. He gave away *half* of his Estate, half of all that he had, to the *Poor*. O *Zacheus*! what a way didst thou go to Heaven? how few are there, I fear, that follow thee thy way? and yet I am no less afraid, that there's hardly any other way to be found, which will lead us thither, but by doing in some measure what thou didst.

May it please God to move your hearts, that you may in some fair Proportions, every one of you, imitate his Example! Then indeed you will, as he did, bring *Salvation* to your Houses, to your Selves, and to your Families, as being Sons of *Abraham's* Faith, who spar'd not his dearest Injoyment when God call'd for it: and be sure of it, the Cries of your *Poor* are God's call.

One word more, and I have done. Let me beg it of you, that you will consider what has been spoken, and as I have heartily delivered that which in the *Doctrinal* part I am assured out of the Word of God to be the Truth, and nothing but the Truth; that which in the *Applicatory* part I have all reason from your own *True Report* to believe there is too just Occasion for, your Charity and my Vehemence to excite it; so you would all of you kindly lay it to Heart, and do thereafter.

Let me desire you again and again, with all the Instances of importunity, by the Bowels of God's tender Compassion to us Sinners, by the infinite and unvaluable Love of our blessed Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*,  
by



by that *Charity* which is the principal gift and Grace of God's *holy Spirit*, the great *Gospel-Duty*, the fulfilling of the *Law*, the summary of *Christian Doctrine and Practice*, the surest Evidence of our *Faith* and the main Assurance of all our *Expectations*, and of those glorious and joyous *Retributions*, which await the Charitable in the World to come: as you hope to enjoy what you have here with *Peace and Comfort* and a good *Conscience*; to secure your worldly *Possessions*, to settle and leave good *Estates* to your Families; as you expect to be blessed in your *Persons*, in your *Posterities*, in *this Life* and in the *next*: as you design to be *Wise and Happy*, which those only are who attain their great End, that is, to serve God faithfully in your Generation, and to save your own Souls at the last: By all these ties and obligations let the Love of God constrain you frankly and cheerfully to express your Bounty and Liberality to the *Poor*, that sowing plentifully, you may reap plentifully; and be resolv'd with your selves that you can never do too much, never do enough for that good God, who has done so much for you already, and will yet do more: having provided for such, as I exhort you to be, that Felicity and Bliss, which the eye of man hath not seen, nor can his heart conceive; of which he of his *Mercy* by his *Grace*, when we have finished our Warfare here, make us all Partakers. *And may he grant, that the Words, which ye have heard this day with your outward ears, may through his grace be so grafted inwardly in your hearts, that they may bring forth in you the fruits of good living, to the honour and praise of his Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

2 Cor. 9. 6.

1 Cor. 2. 9.

## *The Spiritual Building.*

A Sermon Preached at the Consecration of *Christ-  
Church in Southwark*, Decemb. 17. 1671.

Eph. II. 21, 22.

*In whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth  
unto an holy Temple in the Lord :*

*In whom also you are builded together for an habitation  
of God through the Spirit.*



1 Cor. 3. 10.

THE design of our present meeting in this place being to *dedicate* a new erected Building to the publick and solemn Worship of God, I could not pitch upon a more suitable Subject of Discourse to entertain you with, then this passage of the Apostle, one of the wise Master-builders of the *Christian Church*, who in the close of this *Chapter* has, as his manner is, with a continued *Allegory* pursued and improved the most considerable terms of *Architecture*, used about material buildings, to a spiritual sense and to holy purposes.

Yet these words, I have read to you, having so close and inseparable a Dependence upon the words foregoing, and the whole building of the *Context* being, as it is here exprest, so *fitly framed together*, that the one part without the other would be imperfect; the *latter* representing only the Structure; but the *former* discovering the very Foundation: give me leave to begin (as the Apostle doth) at the bottom.

Verse 19. *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God.*

Verse 20. *And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone.*

Here, you see, lies the Ground-work, upon which the whole spiritual Building is to be raised. Now follows the Superstructure and Edifice it self, which being thus solidly founded, is no less handsomly compacted and fitly framed together. *In whom all the building fitly framed together, &c. In whom you also are builded together, &c.*

It is not to be question'd, what some of the *Interpreters* observe, but that the great *Doctor of the Gentiles* directed this *Epistle* particularly to those of the *Ephesians*, who had by his preaching been converted from Heathenism to the Christian faith. Wherefore immediately after the *Salutation*, he falls a blessing God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for that great favour of his in designing the whole Heathen world to a Partnership of all spiritual blessings in *Christ*, which in the time of the legal *Oeconomy* had been confin'd to one peculiar People of the *Jews*. And this he does in so ample and full a Declaration of God's purpose in *Christ*, in the *first Chapter*; where he tells us, that we were *chosen* in him, *predestin'd* to the Adoption of children by him, and *accepted* in the Beloved, that I know not whether all Scripture can afford us the like. This purpose of God he there calls, *verse 9, 10. the Mystery of his Will according to his good pleasure; that in the Dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ*. This again in the third Chapter he calls *the Mystery of Christ*, which in other ages had not been made known unto the sons of men, in that manner as now it was, that the *Gentiles*, who before had been *aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel*, and *strangers from the Covenants of Promise*, should now be made *Fellow-heirs*, and of the same body, and *partakers of the Promise in Christ by the Gospel*, *vers. 4, 5, 6*. This lastly is that he calls in the ninth verse of that third Chapter, *the Fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the World had been hid in God, who made all things by Jesus Christ*. And in the *Explication* of this *Mystery* is spent the *Doctrinal* part of this *Epistle*, which is taken up in the *three first Chapters*, as in the *Application* of it by practical Inferences of moral Duties the *three last*.

How this purpose of God was brought to pass and had its effect, he shews in this *second Chapter*, where having reminded them of that forlorn estate they were in, whilst Heathens, down to the thirteenth verse, he tells them, they had this Admittance *by the Blood of Christ*; that he being our Peace, had not only made both People one, by breaking down the *partition-Wall*, *abolishing in his Flesh the Enmity, the Law contain'd in Ordinances*, so making peace between Jew and Gentile, he means by cancelling and voiding the *Levitical* Ministration, which had set them at that distance before; but also had *reconciled both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the Enmity thereby*: and so making Peace too betwixt God and us, by satisfying for our sins the Causes of that Enmity; and this Peace he himself, he says, came and proclaimed to *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, to them which were *afar off*, and to them that were *nigh*, having procur'd for us both an access to the Father.

In the close of this Chapter, for the Incouragement of them in their Faith, and for the Recommendation of his own Ministry, and the Establishment of his Authority among them, as appears by the very Connexion of the following Chapter with this, he briefly runs over all again, and applies it closely to them. *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners*, to wit, as in times past they had been, *but fellow-citizens with the Saints, &c.*

The Scope and Intention of this place is, (as it is of the whole former part of the *Epistle*, the *Doctrinal* part, contained in the three first Chapters) to shew that the *Gentiles* now by Christ are instated into an Equality of Priviledges and Advantages with the *Jews*, the ancient people



ple of God ; that so both *Jews* and *Gentiles* in the Evangelical dispensation being united by *one Spirit* into *one Faith*, in *one Lord*, and compacted together into one Building, make up one and the same Church, one *Houſhold of God*, one *holy Temple in the Lord*, of which Houſhold, of which Temple, the Church of the *Ephesians* here, and conſequently every particular Church of true Believers is a living and growing Member, *built up together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*.

This Priviledge is

1. Declared and aſſerted, propoſed and proved, in the nineteenth and twentieth verſes.

2. Accommodated and applied, evidenced and brought home, in the one and twentieth and two and twentieth.

*Fiſt* then it is declared and propoſ'd in the nineteenth verſe ; where he ſhews the Nature and Quality of this Priviledge, the Dignity and Advantage of it. *Now therefore ye are no more ſtrangers and foreigners* ; not *ſtrangers* and aliens, that have no right at all, but *fellow-citizens with the Saints*, deniſons and freemen, that have a right to all thoſe Immunities, which ever the *Jews*, the holy Nation could challenge in the time of the Law ; not *Forreigners*, outcomers or inmates, *negotii*, that have but a precarious right, if any, to the Bleſſing and Favour of God, but of the *Houſhold of God*, his Domeſticks and his Churches gremials ; בני בית, Children belonging to the Family and to the Inheritance too.

*Again*, this Priviledge is aſſerted and proved in the twentieth verſe ; where he ſhews the Condition and Qualification of it, the Security and Ground of it ; and this upon two Conſiderations.

1. That they are *founded on the Apoſtles and Prophets*, the two Books of the Old and New Teſtament, wherein the Doctrin of Salvation is fully and clearly deliver'd : for *Moses* alſo and the Prophets witneſs of Chriſt, as he tells us ; whence *S. Jerom* renders the Churches, being framed together, *Compaginata*. *And are built upon the Foundation*, the Doctrin of the Apoſtles in the New Teſtament, and the Prophets in the Old ; and this *pro ratione Miniſterij*, miniſterially.

2. That they are united to *Chriſt* as to the Head, by the adherence of Faith on their ſide, and by the influence and guidance of his Spirit on his part : *Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief Corner-ſtone*, which holds all the building together ; the alone Author and Finiſher as well as the only Object of our Faith : and this *pro ratione Auctoritatis*, authoritatively.

The nineteenth verſe ſets down the Benefit and Advantage by Chriſt ; the twentieth points out the Duty and genuine Character of a true Chriſtian. *That* diſcovers what *jus in re* is, what the Priviledge amounts to in the Poſſeſſion and Injoyment of it ; *This* directs, how *jus ad rem* is acquired, what it is that gives men a right to this Priviledge, and capacitates them for the attainment of it.

From theſe two *Verſes* thus explain'd, we ſhall gather *two* preliminary *Observations*, neceſſary for the grounding of our following Diſcourſe ; which yet we ſhall but name, and not inlarge in the proof of them, as ſuppoſing they will, from the Literal meaning and Coherence of the Apoſtles words, without any need of other probation, eaſily be granted. Only before I proceed to them, I ſhall in a word or two answer a *ſcruple*, which may be raiſed from our Interpretation of each of theſe two verſes.

In

In the nineteenth verse, how it can properly be said Citizens and yet Domesticks, *fellow-citizens with the Saints and of the Household of God*. This way of speaking is very familiar in Scripture, to term the Church the *House of God* and the *City of the Saints* too, the *new Jerusalem*; nor is it at all improper, since a City is but a larger Household, and a Family a contracted City.

In the twentieth verse, whether the Apostle by mentioning here *the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets* does not seem to contradict what he says to the *Corinthians*, that *other Foundation then Christ can no man lay*; and then if he be the only Foundation, how comes he here, as also it is elsewhere applied out of the *Psalms*, to be styled only the *Corner-stone*. 1 Cor. 3.11. Psal. 118.22.

1. First that place to the *Corinthians* is perfectly consonant to this, it being the same *Foundation* that is meant in both places: for *Christ* alone is that very foundation, which both *Prophets* and *Apostles* have in their preachings and writings laid down to build the Church upon: and so it is here called *their Foundation* meerly *per modum Ministerij*, as I said; in that they were made use of by their Ministry and Doctrine, as Instruments for the laying this foundation, and building the Church of God upon it. So that this expression does not derogate any thing of Honour from the Office or Person of our blessed Lord; but only intimates to us the authentick Testimonies, by which we may know, whether we are indeed built upon him or no; there being no more to be understood by the *Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets* here, then that Doctrine which we have received from them, whereof as *Christ* is the main Subject, so he is to be the only Object of our Faith.

2. And then that *Christ* is the Foundation, which bears up the whole Structure, should also be intitled the *Corner-stone*, is no way incongruous; that being also a chief part of the building, which knits the rest together; here especially this notion was most agreeable to the Apostles sense, who having discoursed throughout this Chapter, the *Gentiles* and the *Jews* being made one in *Christ*, could not possibly with a more fit *Metaphor* resemble that Union, then by comparing *Christ* to a *Corner-stone*, in whom the two People, as two Walls, on the one and the other hand, meet and are kindly conjoyn'd and compacted into one spiritual Building.

Having thus past over those seeming *Objections*, we come to our *Observations*, which are these.

I. Out of the nineteenth verse, from the Nature and Quality of the Priviledge, which the *Ephesians* and we of the *Gentiles* are by *Christ* made Partakers of, we draw this Proposition.

*That it is a Priviledge of eminent Dignity and infinite Advantage to be admitted into the Communion and Fellowship of the Church, the House of God and City of the Saints.*

II. Out of the twentieth verse, from the Condition or Qualification required for the attainment of this Priviledge, we fetch this Conclusion.

*That the Orthodox Faith, whereby we keep to the Apostolical Foundation, and hold to Christ the Head, is a sure Touch-stone to try a man's spiritual State, whether he have fellowship with the Saints, and belong to the household of God.*

I. *That it is a thing of superlative Dignity and unvaluable Advantage, to have Communion with the Church*; I mean, as the Apostle here, by the Common suffrage of all Commentators, intends it, the *Church militant*. For he speaks here of a *building* that is a *framing* and a *growing*; though I know too, the *hopes of our calling*, and the *riches of the glory of our Inheritance in the Saints*, or *among the Saints*, as it is exprest *Chap. i. verse 18.* which are things of Expectancy, not to be posselt but in the *Church Triumphant*, are also included; *Glory* in the next Life being by necessary Consequence to attend *Grace* in this.

But we now treat of the present Emolument and Honour of such a partnership. For what an unspeakable Blessing is it to walk in *Light and Love*, to be assured of God's *guidance and acceptance*? to have his *sins* forgiven and his *services* rewarded? to have a share in all holy *Ordinances*, and a right to all the *Privileges* of the Gospel? to be matriculated into God's *Household* by one Sacrament, and to be entertain'd at his holy *Table* in the other? to be grounded in the same *Faith, Hope, and Charity* with all the *Saints* of God? to be a partaker together with them of *Grace* here, and a coinheriter of *Glory* hereafter? For all this, and much more, is here to be understood by being *Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God.*

Psal. 87. 3.  
Psal. 36. 8.

*Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou City of God*; and what pious soul is not *abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his House*?

And this Consideration highly improv'd, when we look back upon our former State; what we were partly by the pravity of our Nature, partly by the Justice of God, *strangers and foreigners.* This the first.

II. *That this Privilege of Church-fellowship belongs to none but to the Orthodox, to true Believers, those who are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, and acknowledge Christ to be their Head.* It is a vain thing for any Person or Church, any man or Society of men, to pretend Fellowship with the *Saints*, that will having nothing to do with the *Prophets and Apostles*, and that either rejects *Christ* himself, or at least has no true Interest in him. It is not every Company of men then makes a *Church*; but it must be a regular Assembly built upon the *Foundation*: nor is it every Person, that is seemingly Religious in a way of his own, that can fairly lay claim to the Privilege of *Church-fellowship*, unless he take the *Apostles and Prophets* along with him, and own *Christ* as Chief. *To the Law and to the Testimony*, as the Prophet states it in his time. 'Tis none of my business to define what Truths are *Fundamental*, what not; much less to set down a *Catalogue* of such Truths. But this I may say, that we are not altogether unprovided of such a *Standard*, if that be true, which Master Calvin himself acknowledges, that the *Apostles*, when they were to go to their several Provinces, agreed upon one common Form or Confession of Faith, as a *Summary* of the *Credenda* or things necessary to be believed, to be recommended to the Churches, and as a *Test*, by which the Doctrines of men were to be tried.

IIa. 8. 20.

Further agreeably to this, in those *Points and Controversies* of Opinion, in those *Methods and Rites* of Worship, wherein Scripture has not determined, I think I may say with the consent and approbation of all sober, orthodox, peaceable men, that the *Doctrine and Practice* of the Church in its primitive and purer times is to be followed, and its Example mainly to be look'd upon as our ground of acting; and where that is

wanting,



wanting, in things indifferent and matter of Rites, the Judgment of the present Church to be taken.

And methinks the very words here afford reason enough for this Assertion; by the *Apostles* and *Prophets* here, as appears to me, being to be understood none other then the *Apostles* and their *Substitutes* and *Successours*, which were to have after them *publicum docendi munus in Ecclesia*, the publick Teachers of the People, and Preachers of the Gospel; for *Prophecy* in S. Paul's language is *Preaching*. I mean the Established Ministry; for so using the same Form of words, he speaks of them as men in being, *Chap. 3. ver. 5. which Mystery of Christ in other ages*, says he, *was not made known unto the sons of men*, not so clearly discovered, *as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit*. And this is that sure word of *Prophecy*, S. Peter mentions 2 Ep. 1. 19. *whereunto*, says he, *ye do well, that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place*.

And so much of that part of the words, wherein this Priviledge is set down by way of Proposal and Proof. The Instance and Application of it is laid down in these two latter Verses; where

1. 'Tis accommodated Universally *in toto*, in general terms to the whole Church, *vers. 21. In whom all the building fitly framed together*, &c.

2. It is Particularly applied *in qualibet parte*, and brought home to the Church of *Ephesus*, and consequently to every particular Church; not only so, but further to every individual true Member of the Church, *verse 22. In whom also you are builded together*, &c.

I. First for the general Accommodation, that all the building in Christ upon that Foundation grows up to a holy Temple; this plainly refers to the Catholick or Universal Church, *ἡ οἰκοδομή*, the whole building, Collectively; not, as *Erasmus* expounds it against the Opinion of all other Interpreters, Distributively; every building; for then it would have been *ἡ οἰκοδομή* without the Article. Where we shall consider these three severals.

1. Why and in what sense the Catholick Church is called a Building?

2. How it is so, and what manner of building it is; which we have here exprest by two Notions. 1. *Συναρμολογούμεν*, 'tis framed, and that fitly and together. 2. *Ἀυξή*, it is in a growing condition, it increases and enlarges it self continually.

3. To what end and purpose it is design'd; it grows unto an holy Temple in the Lord, for the Lord's use.

1. The Church is likened to a Building, as being made up of several parts, which are all joyn'd and knit together in Christ Jesus the Foundation. And in this sense that close Union and Dependence, which the Church has with Christ and its Members with one another, is represented by this Apostle up and down in various Metaphors; but in none more usually then in this of a Building, and that of a Body: So he tells us in the fourth Chapter of this Epistle, that the several degrees and orders of Offices and Ministrations in the Church, as *Apostles*, *Prophets*, *Evangelists*, *Pastors*, and *Teachers* were instituted and appointed for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, which from him, as from the Head, derives all its life and vigour. And that to shew what a strict care of Unity, what an affectionate Sympathy there should be betwixt all the Members of this body; there being as

Eph. 4. 4.

one body, so one spirit, and that there should be no Schism in the Body, but that the Members should have the same care one for another, 1 Cor. 12. 25. seeing that we are the body of Christ and Members in particular, vers. 27. And it is the same case in a Building as in a Body, whose several pieces are to be fitly framed together, to render the whole Structure strong and beautiful.

2. And that is the second thing; what a manner of building the Church is; it is framed and it is growing.

First 'tis framed, wrought artificially, and made up of suitable parts, and that according to rules of Proportion, as in other Edifices, the Walls and Roofs, the Lights and Doors, and the several Rooms designed for Safety and Convenience and Decency at least, if not for Magnificence; the Timber and Stone and other Materials to be impley'd 'n the Building squared and fitted for their several places and uses; and then at last compacted, jointed and mortified: so is it in this Spiritual building.

Hence it is, that *multiformis ille Spiritus*, the Spirit of God through his manifold Wisdom hath strengthened and adorn'd the Church with such Variety of Gifts and several Ministrations, and diversity of Operations; insomuch that in the 45. Psalm, as the Vulgar renders it, he is said to be *circumamicta varietatibus*, cloathed all about with Varieties.

Exod. 31. 3.

More particularly it hath pleased him to inspire the *Aboliabs* and *Bezaleels*, those whose service he makes use of in the building of the Tabernacle, in the framing of this holy Temple, with various skills and abilities, yet all designed and imployed to one and the same end, the Edification of the Church.

And all this he does, partly as he is the spirit of Wisdom, to have it fitly framed; partly as the Spirit of Peace, to have it framed together. For both these Conditions must be observed to make the Church a regular Structure; that it be both fitly framed as to the analogy of Faith, and framed together also in Love and mutual Charity.

Fitly, that is, *Conformiter*, in perfect symmetry of all the parts to one another and to the whole; and in the due Proportion of Faith, and in a fair decorum of outward Ministration. And

Psal. 122. 3.

Together, that is, *Uniformiter*, at least *Unanimiter*, if not in one Form, yet to be of one Mind in an House. Thus Jerusalem is as a City that is compact together, that is, as the reading Psalms have it, at Unity with it self.

So then the Church must be fitly framed for Beauty, and it must be framed together for strength; fitly as to Judgment, together as to Affection; fitly in the Agreement of Doctrine, and together as much as may be in the likeness of Worship and external Rites.

There are some of our Brethren, whom I will not deny to be fit men, able Workmen, would they but build together; but alas! by taking the building asunder, they indanger and spoil the whole. For if a building be not framed together, it cannot possibly grow up into an holy Temple.

1 Pet. 2. 5.

That is the second Character of this building, *συναμολογούμενη αὐξάν* being fitly framed together. It grows. For it is made up of living Stones; so that there is a double growth. The building it self grows by Addition of more stones; so it is said of the first Church, that there were daily added unto them those that should be saved; and again every single stone

Acts 2. 47.

stone increases too, by Extention of parts, going on from strength to strength: One way the Church grows in its number, in Multitude; the other way in its size and stature, in Magnitude.

And these two very Conditions of *frame and growth* are almost in the same manner and language by this Apostle applied to the Church under the notion of a *Body*. Thus Chap. 4. vers. 16. having spoken of *Christ*, as the Head, he goes on, *From whom the whole body fitly joyn'd together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the Body unto the Edifying of it self in Love.* And so in that Parallel place to this, Col. 2. 19. speaking of the Head, from which, saith he, *all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministred, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.*

So then as the *Body* must be organized, fitly compacted and joined and knit together by joints and ligaments, that so every part having nourishment convey'd to it, the whole may grow proportionably; so this *Building* must be *fitly framed* and put together first, and then it will grow unto an *holy Temple*. That is the *third* thing to be spoken to.

3. The *End* and design of this *Building*, to be a *holy Temple in the Lord*: That which he calls a *holy Temple* here, speaking of the Catholick Church, he does in the next verse, applying it to the *Ephesine Church*, in a plainer term call a *Habitation*. There is no question, but the Apostle alludes in this verse to the *Temple at Jerusalem*, the *Metropolitan Church*, whither all the Tribes went up thrice a year at their three great Solemnities; and in the following verse to the *Synagogues*; where in their several Parishes they did ordinarily assemble themselves, which are also in the *Psalms* called the *Houses of God in the Land*.

Psal. 74. 9.

To pass by this at present; only let me here take notice of another different Expression here used, that the *holy Temple* is said to be *in the Lord*, but for an *Habitation of God* implies that God is in it; so that there is a kind of mutual indwelling between God and his Church, according to S. John's saying, that *God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God and God in him*: And this but what our Saviour pray'd might be, that as he and the Father were one, so we might be one. Now they are one in that manner, that the Son is in the Father, and the Father in the Son; and so is it with us also; we dwell in God, and God dwells in us; for as we are of the Catholick Church, that is a *holy Temple in the Lord*, and as we are Members of a particular Church, that is an *Habitation of God*. In whom also you are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

1 John 8. 16.

John 17. 11.

II. This is the particular Application to the *Ephesians*; and so to all Christians of particular Churches; and that either by way of Affirmation; so we read it, *you are builded together*: or by way of Exhortation; *Be ye built together*, as Calvin would have it; for the Greek word *συναποδομι* is capable of either Interpretation.

Herein we are to observe these three things.

1. What it is that is here affirmed or exhorted to; to be *built together*.



2. *Why*, for what, to what end they are to be thus built? *for an Habitation*, that is, that ye may be an Habitation of God.

3. *How*, in what manner, either to be *built together*, it is *by the Spirit*; or to be *inhabited of God*, when they are built, it is *through the Spirit* too; for *in medium in the Spirit*, may very well referr to both.

1. *You are built together*; or *Be ye built together*; together with the Church *universal*, together with one another in your *particular Churches*; together in *Faith and Love*, in *Doctrine and Worship*, in the *Substance*, and as near as may be in the *Ceremony* of Religion.

That the Church *universal* lies under the Obligation of any one certain *Form* as to externals, where Scripture has not determined, is hard to say; for this perhaps would be all one, as to make one shooe to serve all kind of feet. Possibly there may be some *liberty* in this respect, nay more; certainly there is. For we see several Churches, upon a prudential account, use several *Forms* about the same *Ministrations*, without the reproach or censure of other Churches, that use them not.

But for the *Members* of a particular Church to think themselves at the same *Liberty*, either to be free from all *Forms*, or to use what *Form* they please against the Judgment of the Church they live in, this is as far from *Decency* as 'tis contrary to *Order*; whereas the Apostles Rule is, that *every thing be done decently*, and *as the Church order* according to order, by order and appointment of the Superiours, those that have the Government and Oversight of the Church. Otherwise every single person in a Parish, in a Family, at this rate, might set up a distinct Church; and it would be not only *Quot homines, tot sententiae*, but *tot Ecclesiae* too; so many men, so many Churches, as well as so many Minds.

This *Liberty* sure the Apostle here doth not allow, when he would have us to be *built together*, which cannot be done where every one builds asunder, takes his own measures, and compares himself only by himself.

Again, as to *National* or *Parochial Churches*, which we here understand by *particular Churches*, a Question may be put, which it will be no hard matter for any one, that puts it, to answer it himself: *Whether one may not be a true member of the Universal Church, and so be a Fellow-citizen of the Saints, and belong to God's Household, without any Obligation of giving up his name to any particular Church*, that is, whether he may not be of *Christ*, and yet not own *Paul* or *Cephas* or *Apollos* or any other Teacher, as some in the Church of *Corinth* seem to have done; whether he may not be a good Christian, and yet as to the Orders and Rules of the *National* or *Parish-Church* where he lives, keep himself free, to do *ad libitum*, as he pleases; and so, if he think fit, forbear all Communion with it?

There is, I am confident, such an Opinion walks up and down in the World, and many people, I fear, delude themselves with such a fancied *Christian liberty*. But, as I said, it is easily answered out of the Apostle. For if that *Fellowship* with the *Saints*, and that Relation to Gods Family be no way to be had, but by being built upon the *Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*, the first Planters of Churches and their Successours and other Preachers of the Gospel; then what tolerable

ble Plea can they make for that *Priviledge*, who do not observe the *Condition* upon which it is to be obtain'd.

As to those *Corinthians*, the Apostle charges them downright with *Schism*, and those that said they were of *Christ* are included in the charge alike as those that were of *Paul*, and *Apollos*, in that they divided *Christ*. For those, who upon pretence of the great Veneration and high Admirations they have for one person, be it *Christ* himself, censure and reject all others in the same common work of Preaching the Gospel, they do indeed reject *Christ* himself, as he himself has resolv'd it, that whosoever receives not those whom he sends, does not the Affront so much to them that are sent, as to him that sent them. Luke 10. 15.

Further, it is taxed as a Fault by the Author to the *Hebrews*, in those that forsook the publick Assemblies; and indeed where Religion is in any Church established in purity of Doctrine and decency of Rites, as, praised be God, by the very Confession of other *Reform'd Churches* abroad, it is with us here in *England*; it must needs be some great and weighty Consideration, something more then ever yet I could meet with in Writings and Discourses, that must satisfie any man's Conscience, who lives within the Verge of such a Church, in his forbearance of Communion with her. Hebr. 10. 25.

The Case is much otherwise with a man in time of Persecution, (as it was with *Elias*) or in a Solitude or amongst barbarous Infidels, where one may be a true Member of the Church, though he has nobody to joyn in Communion with him.

To shut up all; it is necessary for Christians to be *built together*, that so they may *keep the Unity of the Spirit*; for we are to be built together *by the Spirit*. Eph. 4. 3.

2. And *how* is that? *There is one Body and one Spirit*, which animates that body and all the members of it; and *Spiritus hos regit artus*. Were there no *Spirit*, the *Body* would be but a liveless and shapeless Lump, and the *Building* be but an indigested heap without either strength or beauty; and were this *Spirit* not one, but divided, it would more look like Monster then *Body*, more like ruins then a Building. And though the Spirit give forth different *Gifts*, and have divers *Operations*, yet it self is one and the same still, and all the several *Dispensations* of it tend constantly to the same end, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of the Body of Christ*: and this especially *by the work of the Ministry*, Eph. 4. 12.

He it is then that prepares seed for the Sower, and bread for the Eater; that opens the mouth of the Speaker, and the heart of the Hearer; gives Utterance and Entrance; and mingles Faith with the *Word*, and accompanies his own Ordinances with Power; that virtuates the *Sacraments*, and makes them effectual to the end of their Institution: in a word, that builds up pious Souls in their holy *Faith*, and by the guidances of *Grace* brings them to assurances of *Glory*; even in this Life giving them Earnest and present Possession of that *Glory*, by bringing down Heaven into them, and by making them fit *habitations for God*, and *Temples of the holy Ghost*. That's the next thing to be considered. Isa. 55. 10. 1 Cor. 6. 19.

3. *To what end* we are thus to be built together; *for an habitation of God*: and how is that done? *by the Spirit* too. The *Spirit* first builds us, designs and fits us for *Habitation*; and then God inhabits, dwells in us by the Spirit. *Habitation* is the design of Building. Thus Solomon built

<sup>1</sup> Kings 8. 13. built God an *House* to dwell in. We are built up by the *Word*, and then the *Word* dwells richly in us; the *Spirit* builds us up in our holy Faith, Col. 3. 16. and dwells in us by Love. Rom. 8. 11.

Now although that *holy Temple in the Lord* in the former verse, and this *Habitation of God through the Spirit* here, be principally and mainly intended, that of the Catholick Church; this of particular Churches and of every faithful Soul, in a *spiritual* sense; yet, which is the ground of the Apostles allusion, it is no way unreasonable, nay it must be allowed us, to take the words in a *literal* and ordinary acception too, for *material Buildings*, consecrated to God's publick Service, to be *Temples* and *Houses of God*. For otherwise the Accommodation would be lame, and the similitude impertinent.

'Tis true, 'tis a different Character of *holiness* in the one and the other; in the one there is an *inherent* Holiness, in the other 'tis only *relative*; yet both agree in this, that they are separated and set aside from prophane and common Use, that they are dedicated and devoted to holy Services.

And that is the very intent and purpose of *Consecration*, the business we are now met about, which is no idle insignificant Ceremony, but a thing of serious Use and constant Practice, down along through all Antiquity, ever since there have been *Churches* in the World. For even then, before *Christian Religion* had the countenance of the civil Authority, before they had such *Fabricks* purposely erected for God's publick Service, they celebrated their *Christian Assemblies* in places set aside and devoted to that peculiar Use, as appears by *S. Paul*, where he expostulates with his *Corinthians* for their disorders, when they met at the Sacrament, 1 Cor. 11. every one according to the custom then bringing his own Provisions with him, and contrary to the first intent of those *Agapæ* or Love-feasts, feasting himself to the reproach of his poorer Neighbours. *What*, says he ver. 22. *have ye not Houses to eat or drink in, or despise ye the Church of God?* This *Church of God* then was some peculiar place; where they used to meet, purposely appointed for spiritual Exercises.

Now that under Persecution, we read, that the Christians met as they could, in Fields and Caves, &c. seeming to make no difference of places for God's worship; God forbid that any one should be so absurd, as to imagin that, in Compliance with the Practice of the primitive times, we are oblig'd to do every thing simply and exactly as they did, when they had not liberty to do otherwise, and from a present necessity, which lay upon them, to argue it a constant Duty in us to do so.

I am sure, our *Saviour* himself all along, and his *Apostles* after him, as long as they might, kept to the *Temple* and the *Synagogues*; and *Christ* tells them aforehand as a grievous thing that should befall *Jew-Converts*, (which it would not have been, had they been at Liberty to have excommunicated themselves, and had it not been their Interest, as well as Duty, to have frequented those places of Worship) that the *Jews* would make them *ἀνωμαλῶς*, would *excommunicate* them, and turn them out of their *Synagogues*, out of their Church-fellowship. John 16. 2.

As to the consecration of such Buildings, *Temples* or *Synagogues*, *Cathedrals* or *Parish-Churches*, to be *Temples in the Lord* and *Habitations of God*, I shall not trouble you, and it were needless I should, with an historical Deduction, when it began to be in use, and how it was performed. It is sufficient to any pious man, that we read our blessed *Lord* himself



himself, who came to alter the whole *Jewish* Oeconomy, yet honoured with his Presence the *Eucania*, the Feast of Dedication, *John* 10. 22. and it cannot but satisfy any rational person, that the reason of the thing is the same still as it was then, and that it is highly agreeable to *Decency* and *Order*, that a place design'd for God's Worship and publick Assemblies should publickly be appointed, and in solemn manner declar'd to those uses by those that are the Governours and have the oversight of Church-affairs.

As to the superstitious fopperies of the *Roman-Church*, as Christning of *Bells*, and twenty the like ridiculous Ceremonies, we hold our selves content with our Saviour's own Definition in this case, that the *Temple* Matth. 23. 17. sanctifies all that is used about it; and that *Ustensils* &c. which are given to the Churches use, are *ipso facto* sacred, and need not the Ceremony of any further Consecration.

And for *Invocation of Saints*, we both disavow the *Popish* Doctrine and disallow their Practice; for that many, most of our Churches are intitled to some *Saint* or other, is only in point of Commemoration; the Christian Churches at first having been built *super memorias Martyrum*, over the Tombs and Monuments of *Saints* and *Martyrs*; whither also, before they had Churches to assemble in, they were wont to resort for their Devotions. Though now too the very memory of many of those *Saints* is quite lost and gone, and all the use of their Names, that is left amongst us, is for the civil distinction of *Parishes*.

But enough of this, which yet lying so plain in my way, I could not; and the present *Occasion* requiring something to be said; I ought not wholly to have balked.

From *material* Buildings, which are commonly (and according to good reason and Scripture too) called Churches and the *Houses of God*, we return to you, *Beloved Christians* here assembled, who are *living Stones*, of whom the Church, the *spiritual* House of God is to be built up;

Let me close all with a brief *Exhortation* to you, and hearty *Prayer* for you, that you may learn to value that great Priviledge of *Church-fellowship*, by which you are made *Citizens with the Saints* and God's domesticks;

That you would bless God, who has by *Christ* proclaimed Peace to those that are nigh and to those that are farr off, and has of *Jews* and *Gentiles* made one People, and vouchsafed us of the Heathen world, who, time was, sate in darkness and in the shadow of Death, the Light of the *Gospel* and the means of Grace; which means if we neglect, our Condition will be far worse then theirs that have them not;

And that you would have an affectionate Pity for those of our *Brethren*, who wilfully cut themselves off from the Communion of the Church, by rejecting the *Ordinances* and slighting that *Authority*, which Christ has intrusted with Her.

That to ascertain to your selves this *Priviledge*, you would hearken to wholesome *Doctrine*, and suffer your selves to be built up in your holy *Faith* upon the ground-work of *Apostolical* and *Prophetical* teachings, holding to the chief *Corner-stone*, Christ *Jesus*, and to that end would take an especial care to avoid those, who improve *Schism* into *Heresie* by departing from the *Foundation*, and denying the Lord that bought them:

And

And in order to all this, that you may be made, and so continue true and lively Members of the *Catholick Church*, the body of Christ; considering that whosoever is cut off from the *Body*, is render'd incapable of drawing Life or receiving any Benefit from the *Head*.

And lastly, that you of this *particular Church* may, in perfect *Harmony* of Judgment and Affection with the whole Church of God amongst us, be *built up together*; and being stedfast in the same *Faith*, joyful through the same *Hope*, and rooted in the same *Charity*, may always hold *the Unity of the Spirit in the band of Peace*, and by your constant Attendance upon God's House, (and not, as the manner of some is, to withdraw from the *Assemblies*) you may be improved to perfect men in *Christ*, and increase with the Increase of God, and grow up in all *Godliness* and *Vertue*, that being furnished with all graces and spiritual blessings you may all be fit *Habitations of God through the Spirit*, to the Praise of his Grace and the Salvation of your own Souls. *Amen.*

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## *The Episcopal Dignity and Duty.*

A Sermon Preached at the Consecration of the  
Right Reverend Father in God, Dr. J O H N  
F E L L , Bishop of OXON, in my Lord  
Bishop of Winton's Chappel at Chel-  
sey, Febr. 6. 167 $\frac{1}{2}$ .

1 Tim. III. 1.

*This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a  
Bishop, he desireth a good work.*



OUR Saviour, we read *Luke* 10. made choice of *twelve* of his constant followers for his *Apostles*, and *seventy* under the name of *Disciples*, who might personally attend him during his stay upon Earth, and be employ'd by him upon all occasions in the Work of the Gospel; and after his departure might further propagate Christian Religion in their several Provinces and Divisions, and plant and govern Churches. And this agreeably to what we meet with in the *Mosaical* Institution of the Commonwealth of *Israel*, where there were *Twelve*, whom they called ראשי שבטים or *princeps*, the *Princes* or *Rulers* of Numb. 1. 44. the *Tribes*, and *Seventy* likewise chosen to make up the *Sanhedrin* or Numb. 11. 16. Court of ordinary Judicature.

I will not say there was any mystery design'd in this compliance of *number*; though, to confirm it by an Historical allusion, some apply hither the *twelve Wells* of water and the *seventy Palm-trees*, which the *Israelites* found in their Journeyings at *Elim*. The *Palms* by their height to signify the Preheminence of Church-Dignity, in which her Officers are placed; and by the shade of their overspreading boughs and the fruits they were laden with, to denote the great advantages people were to expect from them. And the *Fountains* of water by their unwearied officious course deriving their refreshing streams to the Multitude, to betoken the diffusive Good of Church-Rulers and Governours in their larger compass. The *Palms* fixed to a certain Station; and the *Fountains* of a more unlimited Influence. Exod. 15. 27.

M m

That



Pfal. 109.8.  
Aps 1.25.

That these *Apostles* and *Disciples* were distinct Orders of Church-Officers, will be readily acknowledg'd, when we remember that *Judas* having forfeited his Bishoprick, and another according to the prediction of the *Psalms* being to take it up, *Matthias*, whom the sacred Lot declared his Successor, was advanced from the lower Form of *Discipleship* to that higher one of being an *Apostle*.

1 Pet. 2.25.

Matth. 28.20.

Accordingly the *Ancients* doubt not to compare *Episcopal* Government with the *Apostolical* office, for the Prerogative of laying on of hands and other acts peculiar to that Character; and the common *Presbyters* with the *Seventy*, as Officers employed by and under the *Bishops*. For no rational man can imagine, that our blessed Lord, the chief *Shepherd* and *Bishop* of our souls, having made such a settlement, while he was here himself, should leave his Church unsettled and unprovided after he was gone, whom yet he promised to be with to the end of the World; or that he should not perpetuate those *Functions* and *Orders*, which himself had appointed.

And thus the Church did for some time by her own power, which sure she had not so immediately put in Practice, had she not received it in her Commission from him, who had all power given him from the Father; she made Church-Officers under the same notion, as in the case of *Matthias* before mentioned, and after of *Barnabas* and *Paul*, who went by the name and acted with the authority of *Apostles*, as well as any of the *Eleven*. For though *Christ* himself thought fit to nominate only *Twelve*, according to the *Jewish* method, while the Gospel was confin'd to *Judea*; yet when it was to be preached to all the World, there was great necessity, and doubtless suitable provision made for more, to give it credit among the several Nations.

But this name of *Apostle*, as we may judge, was at last lookt upon as too August and Sacred, fit only for such as had seen the Lord and conversed with his Person, and so might in some sense, according to the Importance of the word, be said to have been sent personally from him; and thereupon, as that Generation wore off, and none now left alive of that Qualification, it was in the early days of primitive Christianity laid aside, and another of *Bishop*, implying the same Duty and Dignity too, though not of the Person, yet of the Place, taken up in its stead: as even among the Students of Humanity and Nature, those who had been formerly termed Σοφῖ, *Wisemen*, were content afterward, by *Pythagoras* his example, to style themselves modestly φιλόσοφοι only, that is, *Lovers of Wisdom*.

What then the *Apostles* were in *Christ's* own time, that are *Bishops* ever since; and what rank the *seventy Disciples* held in the Church then, the same and no other do our *Ministers* hold now.

This is a thing of great Concern to take notice of, for the quiet and good Administration of the Church; and therefore I could not but premise it by way of *Preface*; wherein I have but done just, as the *Apostle* has himself here in the *Text* done before me, who having given his Son and Scholar Archbishop *Timothy* directions, in the beginning of the foregoing Chapter, for the use of publick *Liturgies*, wherein might be comprised all sorts of Prayers for all sorts of men, which *S. Chrysostom* calls καθημερινή λατρεία, the daily Service, or, as we term it, *Common Prayer*, and towards the end forbidding Women the office of teaching or taking upon them any Authority; he now proceeds in this Chapter to give order for the election of Officers, whether *Bishops* or *Ministers*, what manner of men they ought to be; and ushers in his Discourse

courte with a solemn *Form*, and as solemn and weighty a *Sentence*;  
*This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work.*

Here is then, as I right now observed,

1. A solemn Introduction; *This is a true saying.*
2. A weighty Sentence, big with two Truths.

The One is; *That the Office or Function of a Bishop is a good work*; a work of great Excellence in it self, and of no less Advantage to the publick.

The Other is; *That the office of a Bishop may be lawfully and virtuously desired, if it be desired for the works sake*; nay perhaps sometimes, in charity to the Churches necessities, must be desired, at least must not be refused.

I. To begin with the Preface; *This is a true saying.*

Now that a mistaking calumny may not prejudice at first dash, what S. Paul hath said, and what I am to say after him; let me remove that first out of our way. For may some one say, what means S. Paul to say, *This is a true saying*? Does S. Paul say or write any thing that is otherwise? or why then does he affix this *Form* to this saying of his, rather then to all or any of the rest? Why? 'tis such a solemn form of words, as S. Paul is wont to front the most concerning and considerable Truths with; especially if there lie any Prejudice against them in the mind of the Hearers. And thus Christ himself, who was himself the Amen, that is, the Truth, yet prefaces many of his sayings, which were either of the greatest Consequence, or likeliest to find small Credit, with an Amen sometimes doubled, to give them weight and gain them faith. Rev. 3. 14.

And though I shall not detain you long in the Porch, yet being met here upon a solemn Occasion, I ought not in manners to pass by the solemnity of the Text. But because this extraordinary attestation of the Apostle, by which he recommends and confirms, what he is to say, will afford us some Considerations, that may help us to apply to those, who are too apt to disbelieve or slight the Truth of what he here says; I shall defer the further speaking of it till the Conclusion, where will be its most proper place.

II. And thus from the Preface we pass to the Saying it self, which looks like the Resolution of a Case of Conscience, by way of Syllogism.

*Whatsoever is good is desirable*; That's a principle of Nature, a common Notion, wherein the sense and reason of Mankind agrees, and which is freely granted by every one;

*But the office of a Bishop is a good work*: That is the first Truth to be inquired into by us.

*Therefore the office of a Bishop may be desired*; in that he who desires it, desires a good work; which is the second Truth here delivered to us.

I. First for the first: *That the Episcopal Function is a good work.*

Good, that is, Excellent and Honourable of it self.

Good, that is, Useful and Beneficial to Community.

1. *An excellent work*; *excellent*, *honestum*, *præclarum opus*; a noble and brave Employment. For what can be in this sense more good, more excellent, then for a man to devote and consecrate himself and his whole life to the service of God in an eminent manner? to live here in the Body the life of Angels? to be out of the world, even while he is in it? and to have his Conversation altogether as it were in Heaven? For this it is to be a *Bishop*, to be a Succenour of the *Apostles*, to be ever in their glorious Company conversant with our blessed Saviour, and being advanced to the top of the *Church militant*, even in his mortality to join the *Church triumphant*.

This is the business of the *Episcopal* office, *instaurare*, to oversee the Affairs of the Church, and withal to overlook the petty Concerns and Interests of the World, and supported by extraordinary supplies and aids of Grace to live above the necessities and troubles of common Nature; above the Laws of Fate or Chance.

He, who is to purpose a *Bishop*, professeth to be, and is the best of *Christians*, that is, the best and bravest of Men; and being placed in the middle Region, betwixt the upper and the lower World, receives immediately the Influences of Heaven, and as bountifully communicates them to his Inferiours here on Earth: *high* in God's vouchsafements, and *low* in his own charitable Condescensions.

This, this is such a state of Perfection, could every one live up to it, to live solely to the Glory of God, and the Benefit and Example of mankind, that every *Christian*, whose Soul is toucht with any holy Ambition, ought to aspire, if not to the Employment it self, which requires much more then can be supposed in a common Christian, yet at least to the imitation of them (so far as our private *Sphear* reaches) that we may, as this our Apostle exhorts, *be followers of them, as they are of Christ*: who when he shall appear, as *Chief-Shepherd*, to take their accounts, shall give to these *Pastors* of his Church, who have fed their Flocks with *Doctrine*, and led them by *Example*, and have made their Lives and Services answerable to the Eminence of their high calling, a *Crown of glory that fadeth not away*, as *S. Peter* assures them.

1 Cor. 11. 1.

1 Pet. 5. 4.

The *Excellence* of this *Function* will further appear, partly by the high *Relation*, it puts men into; and partly by the noble *Duty*, it puts them upon: both intimated in the *two last verses* of this Chapter, where *S. Paul* tells *Timothy*, that he writes these things to him, *that he may know how to behave himself in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God*; There is the *Relation*: He goes on, *the pillar and ground of Truth*; and, as he says, *without Controversie great is the Mystery of Godliness*: There is the *Duty* implied.

The *Relation*; to be a Steward of God's own *House*, which every *Bishop* in his particular Church is.

The *Duty*; to be a Maintainer and Dispenser of saving *Truth*, even the *mystery* of Christian faith.

Looking *upward*, to be a great Officer in God's family; *downward*, to be a manager of the greatest blessing God ever design'd for the children of men, in securing and preserving the great *Depositum* of the Gospel, to wit, the knowledge of God in his Son Christ, whom to know thus is eternal Life.

John 17. 3.

But



But these Considerations, because they set forth the *Usefulness* no less than the *Honour* of the work, we shall reserve the farther Inlargement upon them to the following head; that this *Office* is a work of equal *Advantage* to others as it is of *Excellence* in those that rightly discharge it.

2. *A Beneficial work to Community.* 'Tis a *good work*, because for common good; every good thing being so much the better, by how much the more common it is.

And this, by reason the Church never wants Adversaries, who allow the Office too *honourable* (they think) as the favour of Princes hath made it, but not altogether so *serviceable* to the Publick, we shall endeavour to prove.

1. From the Character and Qualifications of the *Persons*.

2. From the Parts and Acts of the *Office*.

And then shew, that such *Persons* so qualified, and such *Places* so discharged must needs be conſider'd to have a mighty Influence upon the Happiness of a people.

I. First for the Characters of the *Person*, fit to be chosen into this Office; those are set down in the *seven* following verses at large. I shall not insist on them all, but gather them up into as few Heads as I may.

In the whole Complex of him, both as to his *Abilities* and his *Inclinations*, his *Mind* and his *Manners*, his *Learning* and his *Life*; a *Bishop* must be *Blameless*, *immaculate*, *unreprovable*, such an one, as no man can find just fault with, or shew reason why he may not be admitted to the place.

*Grotius* observes, that this Condition is the same as was required of *Priests* under the Law, that they be *Lausis*, without *macula* or *blemish*; what *Tully* says of those, who were to be Senators, *Is ordo vitio vacat*; and so the *Syriack* seems to understand it, *אֵיבָא דְּמוֹטָא לֹא מְסַהֲכָא בֵּה*, one who has no visible blemish upon him.

In the Epistle to *Titus*, another word is made use of, *ἀνιμωδ*, which Tit. 1.6. is there likewise render'd by us *Blameless*; *sine crimine*, says the *Vulgar*; where *S. Austin* shrewdly remarks, That *S. Paul* does not say, *Siquis sine peccato est*; hoc enim si diceret, nemo ordinaretur. He does not require, that the person should be without sin; for at that rare nobody would pass: but without crime, free from any scandalous sin; whom no one can charge or legally implead as a Criminal.

It is *S. Chrysostom's* note, that the person elected *Bishop* was in a manner to be exposed to publick Censure, as 'twas the custom at the *Olympick* games; that he who was to play the prize, was to be led about by the *Crier* through the whole ring, and a strict Inquiry to be made, whether any one had any thing to say against him, before he was permitted to set upon his Enterprize. And thus was it at *Athens* for choice of their chief Magistrates and Generals, that they must first undergo *summaris*, a publick Trial, and gain the peoples approbation. And no otherwise was it among the Jews, when they chose their *Præfatus Synagoge*, ראש־הקהל the Master or Ruler of the Synagogue: he that excelled others in Wisdom and good deeds, carried the place.

Such

Such a person then as this, who can endure the publick Test, abide every ones Censure, baffle the envy of Adversaries, defie the slanderous tongues of the rabble, and rise up into the Chair with the applause and liking of all people; how venerable and awful will his *Authority* be, whose very personal *Worth* has already inear'd him to the Ingenuous, and whose *Example* of an innocent and blameless Conversation hath aforehand rendred him the Object of good mens Love, and bad mens Reverence?

And now one would think this single *Character* were sufficient; but because men may so disguise their weakneses and vices, their imperfections and immoralities, that the World may not take notice of them, till they are expos'd and render'd conspicuous by Advancement; as 'twas said of *Galba*, *Dignus imperio, nisi imperasset*; he was one deserved the place, had he never come there: therefore here is a further and more particular *Scrutiny* to be past upon him; that he be

In his *Intellectuals* learned and well versed in Gospel-knowledge; for else how can he be *apt to teach*, what he hath not learnt? or impart to others, what he has not yet acquired himself?

He must be *no Novice*, which refers not to Age, but to Understanding; for *Timothy* was young, and our blessed *Lord* himself entring upon his Prophetick Office at *Thirty*, shews, That is, if nothing else be wanting, *Ætas Episcopabilis*.

That fashion of the *Jews* of not admitting any to the Mastership of an Assembly, unless his Beard were full grown, and that, as they said, *propter reverentiam Synagoge*, had more of Ceremony and Formality in it, than Judgment.

But it was a worse custom among Christians in *S. Hierom's* time, it should seem, *Erasmus* tells me so, that it was lookt upon as the highest Commendation of a Bishop, if presently after Baptism he were advanced to that Honour.

He must not then be *recentis discipulatus*, as one renders it, a *Freshman* in Divinity, that is fit for this weighty Undertaking; but one that may be *able by sound Doctrine to exhort* the Faithful; nor only so, but *to convince Gainsayers*, and *to stop their Mouths*; which argues his Abilities also in all *Human learning*, *Antiquity*, *History*, and all sorts of *Controversie*, as being obliged to be skill'd in the weapons of his Adversaries, whether *Atheists*, *Infidels*, *Hereticks*, or *Schismaticks*, that he may with success defend the *Truths* and *Orders* and *Rites* of the Church.

Tit. 1.9.

In his *Morals*, that he be *sober* and discreet in the exercise of his Parts and the manage of his Affairs; *Temperate* and Moderate even in the use of just liberties; *Patient* and Meek, Courteous and *Hospitable*, *Just* and *Holy*; and one that keeps himself free from all those ill humors and qualities of riotous *Excess*, *Anger*, *Ambition*, *Covetousness*, and the like, which even to vulgar apprehensions shew ugly and prove fowl stains in the lives even of common Christians. In a word, one that has a perfect Mastery of his own lusts and passions, that is, *ἐγκρατής*. And he who hath got such an absolute command over himself, is fit to govern the World, which never suffers more, nor runs into greater disorders, then when *Princes*, whether *Sacred* or *Civil*, make themselves slaves to their own Affections.

Tit. 1.9.

Then

Then may he boldly reprove and censure Vices, the contrary Vertues whereof he so eminently exemplifies in himself.

Then will his *Power* be successful, when it is seconded with *Piety*; and the Greatness of his *Place* assisted and adorned with the Goodness of his *Person*.

Then will he be truly revered and readily followed, when at the same time, whilst he acts the *Shepherd*, he shews himself also the *Ensample* <sup>1 Pet. 5. 3</sup> of the flock. For as one says well, *Blandissimè jubetur exemplo*: To do himself, what one bids others do, is the surest way of gaining obedience; and he who is severe to himself, will shame others out of the expectation of an Indulgence.

Even in his outward *Circumstances*, that his *Carriage* and *Habit* bespeak gravity, that he be so stay'd and compos'd, and keep that *decorum* in all his Behaviour, that he may never forfeit a good *Reputation*, which is the greatest Instrument and Advantage any one can be furnished with, for the service of God and the Publick.

This as to the ordering of *Himself*; then as to his *Family*; that he *rule well his own house*. For that a Bishop be *the Husband of one Wife*, <sup>Tit. 1. 6.</sup> doth not oblige him to have a wife, but to have but one, not more, as it was customary among the *Heathens*, and is still in those parts; or not to turn away one wife and take another, as the *Jews* used to do.

That he *have his Children in subjection*, which unanswerably proves the lawfulness of *Bishops* and *Priests* marrying and begetting children against the *Romanists*. However married or not, that he *rule well his own House*, which ought to be a Copy and *Epitome* of the *Church*, as every private *Family* is a little *Commonwealth*. For he who governs well in his own *Oeconomicks*, may the better be intrusted with the Stewardship of God's House, according to that, *Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things.* <sup>Matth. 25. 23.</sup>

This is the Description of the *Person*; and very good reason: for a *Place* of that Height and Weight (as the *Episcopal Seat* is,) requires such a *Person*, and a *Person* of that Worth and Vertue will well become such a *Place*, which is our *next Theme*.

II. The Duties of the *Place*, or those *Acts*, wherein the *Authority* of the *Office* exerts it self, which are mainly two; *Visitation* and *Ordination*; as we shall shew out of *Tit. 1. 5*. For this cause, says he, *left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting* (that is properly *Visitation-work*, and to ordain *Elders* in every *City*: (that's the business of *Ordination*)).

I shall wave the Controversie, whether *Episcopacy* be *Jure divino*, as having at my Entrance shew'n partly, how *Episcopal Government* was grafted on the *Apostolical* stock, and so is not (as Enemies cavil) a *plant, which God hath not planted*. However it be, <sup>Matth. 15. 13.</sup> by *Divine* or only *Apostolical* right, all lawful Powers are the *Ordinances of God*, and our Obedience to them is obliged by *Di-* <sup>Rom. 13. 1.</sup> vine Precept.



1 Pet. 5. 1.

Nor shall I dispute, whether *Bishop* and *Presbyter* be distinct Orders or no; for the promiscuous use of the words in Scripture signifies little, but the humility and condescension of *superiour* Officers, in taking up the *inferiours* Appellation; as *S. Peter*, though an *Apostle*, calls himself *συνπρεσβύτερος*, their fellow-*Presbyter*; and *S. Paul* goes lower, when he titles himself *δίακονος*, a *Deacon*.

*Bishops* are *Presbyters* and something more, it does not follow *è converso*, that all *Presbyters* are *Bishops*, and therefore a parity. *S. Hieron* indeed says plainly they are all one; *Idem est Presbyter qui Episcopus*: but we may perceive his peevishness by his limitation; it was so, he says, before those differences arose in the Church; when one said, *I am of Paul*, another, *I am of Apollos*; and that till then the Churches were governed *Communi Presbyterorum consilio*. Grant it were so; that was but a very short time: so that, however averse he is, he doth acknowledge, there was a distinction even in the Apostles days.

I confess, the *Syriack version*, which is so ancient, that 'tis thought by some to have been *S. Marks*, has but one and the same word to express both *ἐπίσκοπος* and *πρεσβύτερος* by, that is, *ἐλδερ*, an *Elder*; but that proceeded (we may well suppose) from the promiscuous use of the words, I now mentioned.

1 Cor. 11. 16.

Be that as it will, and let others upon that *Fathers* authority be as contentious as they please; I may say, as *S. Paul* doth in another case, *we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God*. We appeal to the universal *Practice* of all Christian Churches, down along from the Apostles time, for *fifteen hundred years* together. In *Law*, an Estate of so many Descents would, by so long a *Prescription*, certainly gain an unquestionable right.

But this is not all: We do not wholly ground our selves upon *Ecclesiastical Tradition* or an *immemorial Possession*. Let *Scriptures* decide it; we accept the Challenge. We have scriptural *President* for it: Our *Timothy* here was Metropolitan of *Ephesus* the chief City of *Asia* the less. We have scriptural *Order* for it too. *Titus* was Metropolitan likewise of the Island of *Crete*. Mind what *S. Paul* says to him, not by way of Advice, but upon the account of his Authority; *Tit. 1. 5. For this cause left I thee in Crete, &c.*

Luke 10. 16.

So then here lies the *Deduction*; God sent *Christ* into the world, as an *Apostle* as well as a *Mediator*; *Christ* sent the *Apostles*, the *Apostles* sent *Bishops*; and what *Christ* says of his *Apostles* and of himself; *He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*; is as applicable to *Bishops*, and those sent by them, that the *Despise* which is shown to Them or any of Us, is ultimately offered to *Christ*, to *God* himself.

We said, there were *two* main Branches of *Episcopal* power, *Visitation* and *Ordination*; as appears by that very passage of *Titus*; to set in order the things that are wanting; that is *Visitation-work*; and to ordain *Elders* in every City; that's *Ordination*.

1. By *Visitation* I mean what the Greek word *ἐπισκοπή* primarily imports, *Inspection, Oversight*; which takes in all acts of *Jurisdiction*; to set in order and manage all spiritual Affairs and Concerns, in their several Districts, to the Advancement of true Religion, the decency of publick Worship, and the Honour and Peace of the Church, together with the infliction of *Gensures* upon the disobedient and scandalous.

And this work so appropriate to the Office of a *Bishop*, inasmuch as among ancient Christians, whosoever did not comply in these things with their Bishops order, was alway lookt upon as a downright *Schismatick* or Worse, and one that wilfully cut himself off from the Communion of the Church.

And this is the Presumption, which S. *John* charges upon *Diotrephes*, (of which too many amongst us are guilty) that he loved to have the Prebeminence, would not admit of a Superiour, but refused the Visitation of his Bishop, *prating against him with malicious words.* 2 John 9, 10.

2. The other of *Ordination* is likewise so peculiarly the work of the *Bishop*, that *Orders* were never otherwise bestowed but by his hands, and common *Presbyters* without him durst never attempt it till within this little above a hundred years at *Geneva*. We all, in the ordinary rank of *Ministers*, are the *Bishops Curates*, and are to be sent and empowered by him.

And here I might bewail the Condition of our Mother the *English Church*; that she has, to her great scandal and mischief, had too many sons put upon her, when by indiscreet and rash Ordination violent hands have been in a manner laid upon her; and of those numbers, who have received Orders, many, having not been otherwise legally provided for, have been forced to vile Meannesses or base popular Compliances, as if they had been ordained to Beggery or Faction.

It may be wondred, why I do not reckon *Preaching* among the Duties of *Bishops*? The reason is, because here I consider a *Bishop* distinctly and separately from *Presbyters*, to whom this Work doth with them belong in common. And the *Apostle* himself allows and makes the Distinction, where he says; *Let the Elders that rule well, be accounted worthy of double honour; especially those that labour in the Word and Doctrine*; where he puts a manifest Difference betwixt *Labouring in the Word* and *Ruling*. And indeed He, who has the care of *all the Churches* lye upon his Shoulders, may well excuse himself from an Attendance upon any one. And in some cases, and at some times to attend that work, might prove a Prejudice to the other, which is greater; *Government* being of a nearer and more general Concern then bare *Instruction*, of which, God be thanked, there is abundant store. Indeed *this* at the first, when Heathens were to be converted, was somewhat necessary; but now that Christianity is settled in the World, things might (one would think) go on in their course without any extraordinary Efforts. 1 Tim. 5, 17.

But *alas!* our unhappiness! we have those to deal with, as to the *Teaching* part, who are worse then those Heathens were; for they had only such Prepossessions as the very light of Nature would help to throw off; but these have imbrued their very Souls and Consciences with contrary, stubborn, invincible Principles of faction; and

are now become wiser than those who should be their Teachers. That as the *Philosopher* demanded of one, who had been taught in quite another method, a double Salary for his teaching him, because he was to unteach him first; so we for the double Labour we must be at with such, deserve (as the Apostle stated it) διπλὴν μισθὸν, a double regard. Besides such *Stray-sheep* as those, many we have are first to be governed before they can well be taught.

To pass over many things might be said; the Pastoral Office of *Bishops* lies more in providing and encouraging able *Preachers*, then in preaching themselves. And this is none of the least Merits of their sacred *Function*, which makes it so beneficial to the Publick.

Matth. 5. 14.

They are sty'ld by our Saviour, the *Light of the World*: and as they are in high place set up for so many great *Luminaries*, to walk their larger Rounds; so they Influence all the lesser Lights within their *Hemisphere*, fixed to their several Stations: and by this means with one conjoynd uniform Brightness and Warmth, the whole Company of Believers is inlightned and invivified.

2 Tim. 1. 13.

This *Inspection* of theirs it is, that secures the *Doctrines* of the Church, by holding to the *Form of wholesome words*, and the *Worship* of God, by keeping together in regular Devotions.

When the Influences of these lights were restrained, what a night of darkness overspread the face of the *English-Church*? Where this good work cannot be carried on, there we see to our grief, what sorry work is made, what a Confusion of wild *Heresies* and *Schisms* has been brought upon us.

O may it please God once to dispel those mists, which have so fowly overcast us, not only to the darkning of our *Church*, but to the indangering of our *State* also?

For *Christian Religion* being well ordered, carries that awe upon mens Consciences, that, were there nothing else in it, nothing of Spiritual, nothing of Eternal advantage, but only that Service it is apt to do the Publick, all Governours, who wish well to themselves and People, would readily admit and cherish it.

And how can *Religion*, which is thus Instrumental to the Security and Ease of *Civil Government*, secure it self, subsist or act its part, unless it self have its *Ecclesiastical Governours*, to which Title *Bishops* have a peculiar Right, and since the Apostles times none, till of late, but They have ever pretended.

In short, so closely and indissolubly are the Interests of the *English Church and State* united and twisted together, that whosoever is disaffected to the one, is likely no great friend of the others; scarce any, who have departed from the *Church*, having not at the same quitted their *Allegiance*; and those, who have made *Rebellion* their design, having as constantly made *Reformation* their pretence, and *Schism* their shelter. For when people have once broken from the Union of the *Church*, and are got loose in their religious Sentiments and Practices, it cannot rationally be expected that any civil Band should hold them together in that Duty they owe to the *State*.

I have done with the first part of the true saying. A word or two of the second, and I shall make an end.



II. That *it is* a thing *Lawful* and *Vertuous*, and in *some instances* of the Churches want *may be Necessary*, to *desire*, at least to accept, the *Office of a Bishop*, for the *works sake*.

I think it is *Tully* observes it of some of the *Philosophers*, that by *immersing* themselves altogether in the pleasures of *Contemplation*, they rendered themselves altogether unfit for the Duties of an *active* life, or at least out of love of their ease and private studies, declined the publick Stage and the Service of their Country.

And for this perhaps *Plato* wish'd, that either *Governours* would study *Philosophy*, or *Philosophers* apply themselves to *Government*. Certainly they do best, who mingle *Speculation* with *Practice*, and have learnt to *act* as well as to *contemplate*.

There is no *Office* in the World, so much as this of a *Bishop*, doth require the most serious studies, either for due Preparations to it, or right Performances of it. Those therefore, who are conscious to themselves, that they are fit for so weighty an Undertaking, or resolve to make themselves so, may safely, out of Zeal to God's glory, and charity to the Publick, desire the *Preferment* with an intent to mind so excellent an *Employment*, and court the *Honour* with a full purpose of attending so useful a *Work*. (But otherwise to desire it upon other accounts, is a sign of a paltry Ambition, the Evidence of a degenerate and perfidious Spirit.) For what Man of a generous and publick Spirit, who has those great Ends before him, would refuse such Advantages of serving a *Church* and *State*? what Person of a pious soul will refuse his Assistances in the cause of Religion, and not rather being called thereunto, modestly submit?

It is the *good Work* and the *lawful Call*, that justify at once and enforce the taking up of the *Office*.

I confess, the Case is not altogether the same now, as it was in the Apostles time, when the *Work*, how excellent soever it might be, was troublesome and dangerous: and yet, when we look upon the present face of things among our selves, it is as sure, that those who mean *Candidates* for this great *Employ*, must prepare themselves for hardship, and resolve to encounter difficulty and reproach, to deserve well, and to be spoken ill of; besides that we know not what storms may hereafter surprize us, if Wise and Good men do not, out of Charity, interpose their Endeavours with their Prayers.

I know, some there are, who look with blear eyes upon the *Churches* Reverence and Revenue, and neither like the *Office* nor *Work* of a *Bishop*; some *Politicians*, I say, who are ready to charge all the Mischiefs of the World upon *Church-men*, had they heard me this day, would object, that I had commended a *Plato's* Commonwealth, an *Utopian* Government; and would ask me, where are those men whom I have been describing, that are such excellent Ministers of Affairs?

I shall not out of flattery compare those great Ministers of our *Church* with the Primitive *Bishops*, holy *Athanasius*, *S. Chrysostom*, *S. Ambrose*, *S. Austin*, as a *mercenary Writer*, hired by a Party, has lately done by some of our dissenting Brethren; and yet no question those ancient *Fathers* had some Enemies in their time, who reviled and slander'd them, as ours have now; and I know of no one, that has with more Effrontery vilified those old *Worthies*, then this scurrilous Writer has done by his odious Comparisons.

But I am not afraid to say, that for the whole set of *English-Clergy*, *Bishops* and inferiour *Priests*, the whole *English-History*, both before and since the Reformation, cannot outvy them: For when I consider the *pious Constitutions* of the *Church*, her *sound Doctrines* and her *Loyal Principles*, together with the *Worth and Abilities* of most of her *Officers*, I doubt not to affirm, that we want no one thing to make us a happy *Nation* and a glorious *Church*, as is in the *World*, but only that *Peace*, which our peevish *Dissenters* deny us; which *Peace* may *God* in his due time grant us to his own *Glory*, the Honour of our *Sovereign*, the Advantage of his *Church*, and the *Welfare* of the *People*.

*Amen.*

*Law established by Gospel.*

A Sermon Preached at the Reading of Sir *Francis*  
*Winnington* of the *Middle Temple*, Aug. 1.

1675.

S. Matth. V. 17.

*Think not, that I am come to destroy the Law or the  
Prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to ful-  
fill.*



OUR Saviour's *Sermon upon the Mount* is acknowledged by all to be a System of *Christian Ethics*, the Summary and Abstract of all *Practical Divinity*; wherein, having, as *Moses* did for the Delivery of the *Old Law*, gone up likewise into a Mountain for the Promulgation of the *New*; first, according to the known Method of *Moral Philosophy*, he begins with the *End* of human Actions, to wit, true *Blessedness* or *Felicity*, which so puzzled the Wisdom of the Ancients, that as *S. Austin* has observed out of *Varro*, there were no less then a hundred or more different Opinions about it. Having rightly stated this in several *Aphorisms* at the beginning of his Discourse, he next addresseth himself to his *Apostles* and chosen Disciples, who were to be the Teachers and Patterns of his heavenly Doctrine; telling them that they in their Office were design'd to be *the Salt of the Earth*, and *the Light of the World*; by whose discreet Conversation and exemplary Piety the rest of Mankind were to be seasoned and inlightned; and then comes down to particular Precepts, as *Media ducentia ad Finem*, those Means, which are to lead us to that *End*; upon which design the remaining part of the Chapter is wholly bestowed.

Only he thought fit, before he set upon this Task, to preface his Undertaking, in this and the two following Verses, with a *Precaution* to remove Prejudice, that they should not think or imagin, that he came to annul or loosen those former Obligations, which had been laid upon them by *Moses* and the *Prophets*; and that backed with an *Asseveration*, that he was so far from intending any such thing, as the Dissolution of that old Fabrick and Body of Constitutions, which God had given them for the rules of *Practice* and *Worship*, that on the contrary one of the main purposes of his Appearance was to confirm the old Law by new Sancti-  
ons,



ons, to reform or clear what had by ill Customs or corrupt Glosses been misunderstood in it, and by new Supplements to fulfil and make up the vacuities and defects of it. *Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, &c.*

For my clearer proceeding and the fairer settling of those *Deductions*, I shall raise from the Words, and withal to avoid repetition of the same things hereafter, give me leave first with all brevity to *explain* the Terms. And

1. What is here meant by the *Law* and the *Prophets*.
2. What we are to understand by *destroying* or *fulfilling* them.

I. The *Law* in general is a binding *Rule*; *Lex à ligando*, is the common saying; but I think rather, *Lex à legendo*, the publishing or promulgation of *Laws* being that, which maketh them *Obligatory*.

Now it is so usual a *Distinction*, that every body knows it, that *Law* is either *Natural* or *Positive*.

The *Law of Nature* is the rule and prescript of right reason. *Positive Laws* are Consequences drawn from that, and suited to the necessities and conveniences of human Society.

*Natural Law* is the same with that we call *Moral Law*, and is implanted into the very Nature and Constitution of Man; that which the Apostle styles *the Law written in the heart*; which even by secret Instincts teaches us *Piety* to God and *Justice* to our Fellow-men; of which the *Decalogue* was a compendious draught; the pravity of sinful Nature and the vicious customs of the World having made it necessary for the supream Lawgiver to deliver this Law *audibly* by word of mouth for the greater awe of the present Hearers, and to set it down *visibly* in Writing, that no one of their Generations to come might pretend Ignorance: and this is that we are told, that *the Law was given because of Transgressions*.

And this Law it is, which renders us accountable to *God's Tribunal*, who sees the Heart and tries the Thoughts, and judges of mens outward Actions by their inward Intentions; he being the alone Lord and Judge of Conscience: whereas the other sort of *Positive Laws*, as regarding mainly the outward man, subjects us also to the *Magistrate*, who makes Judgment of mens intentions by their Actions, the Mind and Conscience of man being otherwise undiscoverable to man, and by Consequence exempt from the Power as well as the Cognizance of all human Authority; though the obligation of Obedience be founded in Conscience too even to human Laws.

Again this *Positive Law* either respects the *Civil* good of Community, such as was the *Judicial Law*; which though appointed by God himself, yet was peculiarly designed for the *Jewish Commonwealth*, and was not intended to oblige any People or Nation besides; or it takes upon it to order things that relate to *Religion* and the Worship of God, such as was the *Ceremonial Law*; to which in like manner the *Jews* alone were oblig'd in their Conformity; their solemn Rites of outward Worship having been designed for that *Partition-wall*, by which they were to be discriminated and distinguished from all other People of the world; and for a Boundary of their Religion, to restrain them from that which they were too too apt to fall into, an Imitation of Heathenish Idolatry and Superstition.

Of these several kinds of Law, *Natural* and *Positive*; *Moral*, *Judicial*, and *Ceremonial*, as they were all delivered by *Moses*, we shall have occasion anon to speak.

By the *Prophets* we are to understand the holy Writers of the *Old Testament*; and that not only in that stricter sense of *Prophecy*, as they did by divine Inspiration foretell things to come, and more especially the Mysteries of the Gospel-state, and the passages of *Christ's* Life and Death, as he was the true *Messias*, who was to come; but also more particularly here, as they were *Expositors* of that Law and of those Precepts which had been given by *Moses*; as we find it generally meant, when the *Law* and the *Prophets* are joined together: So *Christ* affirms, Matth. 22. 40. that upon those two Commandements of loving God with all our heart, and our Neighbour as our selves, and in this very Sermon, that upon our doing to others as we would our selves be done to, hang the *Law* and the *Prophets*. Matth. 7. 12.

And hereupon it is, that from this acception, as the *Prophets* in their Discourses and Writings were wont to expound the Law of *Moses*, that even in the *New Testament* the Exposition of Gospel-mysteries and Christian Duties is by *S. Paul* termed *Prophecy*. I Cor. 11. 4.

And to these *Prophets* also, who did upon occasion make Explications and Applications of the Law, the *Jewish* people were likewise obliged to give their Attendance and to pay their Obedience; and that they might not be deceived by Impostors, they had certain rules and marks to try their *Prophets* by; one of which, as *Ben Maimon* tells us, was, that whosoever pretended in whole or in part to dissolve the *Law*, was to be lookt upon and punished as a *false Prophet*: to which Test we shall by and by apply the case of our blessed Lord; in whose *Person*, as he was the promised *Messiah*, all the *Predictions* of the *Prophets* had their Completion, and so were fulfilled; and by whose *Doctrine*, as he was the *great Prophet*, all their *Expositions* of the *Law* were heightened and improved, and so were filled up.

II. Secondly, what it is to *destroy*, what to *fulfil* the Law and the *Prophets*.

To *destroy* them is in short to decry and disown their *Authority*, to disavow or any way by *Doctrine* or by *Example* to disparage the *Obligation* of them, to break any one of the least of their *Commands* ones self, or to teach others to do so, as it is exprest *verse 19*.

On the contrary, to *fulfil* them is to practise them in our own persons, and to recommend them to others, by all manner of ways, as necessary Guides to the eternal Happiness of men.

And in all these and several more respects it will be found, that *Christ*, however he might be thought to set up for a new *Prophet*, and to bring in a new *Law*, yet did not intend to abrogate the old Constitutions, but did rather confirm, highly improve, and both in his *Person* and *Doctrine* perfectly fulfil them.

Having given this brief account of the *Words*, we now proceed to the Thing it self; where first we shall endeavour to make out the *Assertion* of our Saviour, that he came not to *destroy* the *Law* and the *Prophets*, but to *fulfil* them; which will be our *Doctrinal* part; and then shall press home the *Caution* by way of *Use*, that no Christians would think, that the Son of God came into the World upon any such destructive licentious design.

The

The Proof of the *Assertion* we shall draw out from these following Considerations.

1. That in the general *Christ*, by virtue of his *Office*, and upon the account of his great *Undertaking*, was oblig'd to fulfil all *Righteousness*; and so could not, without Violation of his own Honour and prejudice to his Design, destroy any righteous Establishment, which he found in the World at his coming.

2. That the Law of *Moses*, and the Writings of the *Prophets*, as to whatever was in them of *moral* Concern, did after *Christ's* coming necessarily retain, and indeed could not possibly loose, that Obligation, they had before his coming.

3. That *Christ* did in his own *Person*, as man, exactly observe and perform the whole *Moral* Law, and did also, as a Native of the Country, and a *Jew* born, submit and strictly conform to the *Ceremonial* and *Judicial* Law.

4. That he did in his *Doctrine* highly improve the Obligations of the *Moral* Law, partly by making new Discoveries to the filling of it up, and partly by rescuing it from false Interpretations, to the restoring of it to its primitive integrity and lustre.

5. That as to the *Ceremonial* and *Judicial* Laws, it was not so much by any direct Order of *Christ*, as from the nature of the Institutions themselves, that they were in time laid aside; the *one* having had its full Completion in the Death and Sacrifice of *Christ*; and the *other* of necessity expiring at the Dissolution of the Commonwealth. And then in the last place

6. From all this we shall fetch this Corollary; that the *Law of Nature* has been so far from being destroy'd by *Christ*, that it hath been preserv'd in its full force, explained where obscure, strengthened where weak, supplied where deficient, and amended and set to rights where it was corrupted and depraved; so neither are *Positive Laws*, whereby particular People and Societies of men are to be kept in their *civil Rights* and the *publick Worship* of God, superseded by *Christ's* Law, but rather confirmed and ratified in their just Authority.

I. *Christ* by his *Office* and *Undertaking* was oblig'd to fulfil all *Righteousness*; and therefore could not destroy any thing that he found *righteously* established at his coming.

Now this *Office* was to be the Mediator between God and Man; his *Undertaking* was to make full Satisfaction to an infinite Justice for the sins of men: and by both these he stood engaged to the Performance of all and all manner of Righteousness. For how else could he have mediated between a righteous God and sinful man, had he himself been guilty? how could he have satisfied for the sins of others, could he have been charged with any sin of his own? which, had he failed in any part of Duty, he might have been.

If then he was in his own *Person* bound to answer and make good all the Demands of the Law by an exact unsinning Obedience, that so the *Innocence* of his *Life* might influence the *Merit* of his *Death*, and make it intirely acceptable to the Father, a sweet smelling Sacrifice; if God on purpose sent him to be born of a Woman made under the Law, that he might redeem us from the Curse of the Law; inasmuch as he who knew no sin, was to be made sin, *that is*, a Propitiation of sin for us: it follows, that he, who was thus obliged to the Observance of Laws, could

Matth. 3. 15.

Gal. 4. 4, 5.

2 Cor. 5. 21.



could not, in Honour to his *Person* or Safety to his *Design*, destroy those Laws; which he was bound to observe:

Since he that ought not to do that which is less, cannot be supposed in a capacity to do that which is more.

But to abrogate righteous Laws is much more than simply to offend against them.

And therefore, as it consisted not with the Excellence of his own *Person*, nor with the Interest of the great *Affair* he came about, for him to be a breaker of Laws; so much less should he be an abolisher or disannuller of them.

And this will appear yet more evidently in the next Consideration.

II. *The Law and the Prophets, as to what there is of Moral in them, did of necessity retain the same Force and Obligation after Christ's coming, as they had before it.*

For it was not possible it should be otherwise, the *Moral Law* being in its own Nature unalterable and indispensable, as being the *Law of Nature* it self.

Now whatsoever is *naturally* good, and *morally* obliging, is *perpetually* and *universally* such, and can never cease to be such: so that what there was under this Character in the *Old Testament*, remains good still under the *New*; it being (that I may speak it with Reverence) not in the Power of the Almighty himself to change these things, which are founded on the immutable Perfection of his own *Nature* and Holiness of his *Will*. For though God be of a most absolute *Freedom* in his *Essence* and his *Will*; yet he cannot, as being *Immutable*, be otherwise than he is, nor can he *will* other than what is good; this *freedom* of his exempting him indeed from all *necessity of Coaction* from without him, but not from the *necessity of Immutability*, as he is in himself.

From hence we gather, that whatsoever was or might be repealed or altered of the *Old Testament*-Oeconomy and Dispensation by *Christ* or his *Apostles*, it was not, it could not be of any *Moral* concern.

To instance, in the *Decalogue*, which I said before is an Abridgment of the *Moral Law*, the change of the *Sabbath* from the *seventh* to the *first* day of the Week doth plainly conclude against the *Morality* of the *Sabbath-day* it self, either *Jewish* or *Christian*. For had the *Jewish Sabbath* been a moral Duty, it could never have been abrogated to the end of the World; and were the *Christian Sabbath* so, it must have been kept ever from the beginning. It remains then, that although the sense of Nature obliges men to set aside some proportion of their time for the solemn Service of God, and herein lies the *Morality* of the Precept; yet the Designation of some certain time, of this day or that day, for this use, is now a thing undoubtedly of *Apostolical* and *Ecclesiastical* Institution; and this is matter of *Ceremony*.

Now this which I have here said of the eternal and indispensable Obligation of the *Moral Law*, is that which our Saviour himself tells us in the very next *verse* with an *Amen* set to it; *Verily*, says he, *I say unto you, that till Heaven and Earth pass*, that is, as long as the World endures, *there shall not one jot or one tittle*, not the least letter or point, *in any wise pass from the Law*, so as to loose its Force and Virtue, *till all be fulfilled*; and then he proceeds to a severe Denunciation upon any one whomsoever, *who shall break any of the least of its Commands*, and shall teach men so, that he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of

Heaven, that is, that he deserves to be cast out of God's Church here, and shall be kept out of Heaven hereafter.

III. *Christ, as to his own Person, did exactly observe all Laws, the Moral as Man; that having an universal Obligation upon all Mankind: and the Ceremonial and Judicial, as born a Jew and Subject of the Country.*

That he was obliged so to do, we shew'd before; but now we speak of matter of *Fact*, that he did so, and by that means did acquit his Obligation.

For the *Moral Law*, he himself makes the Challenge to the face of his Adversaries, who, had they had any thing to have said, would not have spared him; *Which of you convinces me of sin?* They did indeed charge him with the breach of *Sabbath*; but that he shew'd them was their mistake; and from the freedom of his Conversation and Life, which he design'd, no less than his Death, for the Advantage of sinners, they did cast unworthy slanders upon him, that he was a *glutton and a wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and Sinners*, implying that his Character might justly be taken from the Company which he kept. And so they did maliciously attempt to blacken the Reputation of his *Miracles* too. But as the *Divinity* of that Power by which he acted on the one hand, so did the spotless *Innocence* of his Life on the other hand sufficiently confute their vile Calumnies.

He who was to take away the sins of the World, was himself without sin; and was only therefore reckoned among Transgressors, because he was to reckon for them, and as our surety to discharge our debts.

Of the *Ceremonies* of the *Jewish Church*, as then in use, how observant he was, we have sundry Instances; as that he was *circumcised* on the eighth day, when he paid down the first-fruits of that precious Blood, which he was in larger streams to disburse from his very Heart at his Passion; that his immaculate Mother according to the custom of *Purification* kept in her forty days, and then came and presented her own pair of *Turtles* together with the *Lamb of God* in the Temple; that he constantly went up to *Jerusalem*, and there eat the *Passover*, till himself became the Paschal Sacrifice; and more, that he kept the *Encenia* or Dedication of the Temple, a Feast not appointed by *Moses*, nor so much as in the times of the Prophets, in meer Compliance with the Authority of the present Church.

Nay further, if *Suidas* may be believed, he was himself one of the Priests of the Temple, was inrolled in *Albo Sacerdotum*, and set down in the Register with an acknowledgment of his miraculous Birth; *Jesus the Son of the living God, and of the Virgin Mary*: and this at least by guesses confirmed out of Evangelical Story, where it is said that he usually, *κατὰ τὸ εἰωθὲς*, according to the Custom, to wit, of Priests so to do, went into their Synagogues; and there we find, how once the Officer deliver'd him the Book, in which he read the *קריאה*, the second Lesson, out of the Prophet *Esay*, or at least some part of it, and then folding it up again, told the Congregation, that this day was that Scripture fulfilled.

This as to *himself*; then as to *others*; when he cleansed the *Lepers*, he bade them go and shew themselves to the Priests, as *Moses* had ordered, and taught all the People to pay their due Regards to the *Pharisees* and other their Teachers, as those that sat in *Moses's Chair*.

The *Judicial* Law he was so subject to, that he lived above it; for whereas the force of that was mainly to restrain the *outward* Actions, and its Design to make People just and vertuous for Fear of Punishment, who would not be so for the Love of Vertues self; he was himself in his own mind posselt, and did possess the minds of others with an *inward* Principle of goodness; and taught that *Purity* and *Peace*, which, if practised, would keep civil Societies in all good Order without the use of Laws; since even an Heathen Writer has made that Remark, *Exi. Senec. quum quiddam est ad legem bonum esse*; it is a poor pitiful business to be no better then Human Laws make us; of which he cannot be charged with the breach, who hath taught us to be good without them.

And surely if they, who were so thirsty of his Blood, could have taken him at any advantage in this kind, they would not so long have forborn the Pleasure, they would have taken in his Sufferings, as they did for three and thirty years.

Nor *was* this all, that he fulfilled the Law in his *Person* only; but

IV. He filled it up too in his *Doctrine*, what by new *Discoveries*, what by *Vindications* of it from corrupt Glosses, inhanfing all our *Moral* Obligations.

To begin first with those *Vindications*; the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had, in compliance with popular Customs, debased all *Morality*, by placing it all in External acts and a demure outside; for Example, that it was Innocence enough, and as much as the Law required, to be free from the gross acts of sin, however the Mind and Conscience of a man might be defiled; which was, as our *Saviour* himself has likened it, *to make clean the outside of the dish or platter*, let the inside be as full of filth as it will; for which reason also he compares them to *whited Sepulchres*, that make a fair shew, but within have nothing but rottenness and stench. This indeed might serve as to men, who cannot inspect the Heart, nor take Cognifance of mens Consciences; but the All-seeing God is not to be put off with such Eye-service. Wherefore Christ according to the true purpose of the Divine Law informs us, that it is the inward man that is highly accountable to God's Judgment; that in his sight rash *anger* and secret *grudge* is no better then *Murder*; that to give our Brother abusive language is no less then to wound him, and to offer violence to his person; and that to look upon a Woman, so as to lust after her, is all one as *Adultery* in God's account; who judges not, as man judges, according to outward Actions, but according to the Motions of the Heart.

They held further, that so a man did not *for swear* himself, it was lawful enough to *swear* with or without Occasion, how rashly or vainly, or by what, they valued not; contrariwise he teaches it to be unlawful to *swear* by any Creature at all; no, not by God himself in ordinary Converse.

They own'd that they ought to be kind and friendly to their Brethren the *Jews* and their Friends; but they were allowed to hate their Enemies, and to do them all the spight they could; he on the other hand instructs us to *love our Enemies*, to pray for our Persecutors, and to do good to those who despitefully use us, and to look upon all men as our Brethren, descended from one common Parent, partakers of the same *Nature*, and capable of the same *Grace*.



Besides, they added several *Traditions* of their own, to which they not only gave a divine Authority, but jumbled out divine Precepts to make room for them; excusing the Duties of Children to their distressed Parents, with a pretended Piety to the *Corban*. Wherefore at the very Entrance upon these *Amendments*, which he pursues throughout this Chapter, he tells us plainly, that if our *Righteousness* exceed not theirs, we are in no likelihood of being *Christians* in this Life, or *Saints* in the next.

Mark 7. 9, 10,

11.

Matth. 5. 20.

Then as to *Discoveries*; whereas the People of the *Jews*, for the most part, according to their carnal Conceptions, were wholly taken up with earthly and *temporal* good things and worldly Blessings, contriving all the *Promises* made to the Obedient in that mean way, insomuch that one fashionable Sect among them, the *Sadduces*, expressly denied the *Resurrection* and the Life to come: Our Saviour hath in his Celestial Discourses opened such a Scene of *spiritual* Benefits and Advantages at present, and of *eternal* Joys and Glories in expectance, which must necessarily have a powerful Influence upon a holy Life and vertuous Practice; since there cannot be a more effectual Incouragement of a true and sincere Piety, then the Assurance of such great *Rewards* and vast Retributions.

These *Explications*, these *Manifestations*, wherein *Christ* hath spiritualized both the *Precepts* and the *Promises* of the *Moral Law*, have given it a new life, a new sanction: whence it is that it is called the *New Law*; it being the unanimous sense of the *Fathers*, that the *Old* and *New Testament* are the same in substance, and differ only in the Circumstance of clearness; in that the *New Testament* lay hid in the *Old*, and the *Old* one has been laid open in the *New*.

There is, I know, another reason also, to which I shall not now speak, why it is called the *New Law*, in that it has provided for us *Grace* to assist us in our Performances, and to pardon us in our Failings, which the *Old Law*, as it was the *Law of Works*, did not, could not afford. And this is so far from abolishing it, that it puts a higher Vigour and Force in it then ever it had before.

This as to the *Moral Law*.

V. Nor was *Christ* less kind for his part, to the *Ceremonial* and *Judicial Laws*.

It is a complaint, a learned *Jew* makes of his Country-men in his Boord intituled *Cofri*, that they placed their Religion only in *Ceremonies* of worship, and were strict in the nice *Formalities* of a seeming Justice, in the mean time neglecting the *Statuta Intellectualia*, as he calls them, that is, those Duties which every man's understanding and reason will convince him to be absolutely necessary and indispensably obliging; and faith truly enough, that this had been the great cause of their ruin and extirpation.

Matth. 23. 23.

This our Saviour calls tithing of *Mint* and *Cummin*, and passing by the *Magnalia*, the great things of the Law. He freely acknowledges that *those*, though of a minuter Consideration, were not to be omitted, but withal urges the indispensable Necessity of *these*, which were Duties of far greater weight and moment, that they ought by all means to be done.

And

And as he in his own Person observed those lesser things, so neither were they slung off by any express Order of his, but fell of themselves, as having nothing left to uphold them. For the *Rites and Ceremonies* of *Levitical* ministrations received their deaths wound, and had their *Consummation* est upon the Cross, when the Son of God by that one perfect Oblation of himself, put an end to the whole typical Service and *Mosaical* Pedagogy; *Christ* being the end of the Law, which was but a

Rom. 10. 4.  
Gal. 3. 24.

*Schoolmaster* to lead them to him. And though for some time, after our *Saviour's* Death and Resurrection, they struggled for life, and did a while retain somewhat of their ancient Credit and Reputation; the *Apostles* being a little tender in the Point at first, and loath to disoblige the *Jew-Converts* with an utter Abrogation of that, they had such a zealous esteem and kindness for: yet when they came to that height, as to impose them upon the *Heathen-Converts* too, and to assert the Necessity of them as to Justification and Salvation, and that some early *Hereticks*, who had taken the Character of Christianity upon them, joyned with those *Jewish* Zealots in pressing of Circumcision and other Rituals, *S. Paul* foreseeing the ill Consequences of this humour, and that *Christianity* it self was in danger to be overrun with *Judaism*, thought it high time for him to bestir himself, and to give check to that growing evil, which he has done by large Discourses and elaborate Reasonings throughout the body of most of his *Epistles*, that being at that time the great Controversie, which vexed and harassed the Peace of the Church, and which being not well understood, has proved a main Occasion of mistaking the blessed *Apostle* in those his Writings.

And indeed those *Ceremonies*, as to *Purifications* and *Sacrifices* and the like, were only external Adumbrations of that inward Purity, which *Christ* in his *Doctrine* was to recommend, and of that plenary Satisfaction, which he by his *Death* was to make, and consequently were but *temporary Institutions*, to last only till the truth and substance (of what they typified) was come, being then to be of no further use: which the Author to the *Hebrews* has at large, with a great deal of *Jewish* learning, discoursed.

And as to their *Judicial Laws*, which were things of a *Politick* concern; *Christ* never meddled with them any further then to foretell the downfall and utter Destruction of the State and People of the *Jews*, which by the just Judgment of God hapned forty years after his *Death*: Now it was not possible, that their *civil Sanctions* could outlive the date of their *Commonwealth*, nor could it be expected that their *Laws* should stand good, when there was not one stone in their Structures left to stand upon another.

And thus we have gone over the gradual *Deductions*, by which we were to prove that *Christ* came not to destroy or dissolve the Law. There remains

VI. In the last place, the *Corollary* to be deducted from all the foregoing *Deductions*, that as *Christ* has highly improved and ratified the *Law of Nature*, so his Religion in its Principles doth fairly comport with the *positive Constitutions* and *Municipal Laws* of particular Countries and Nations, and gives no Authority or Encouragement to any one, upon pretence of *Evangelical* freedom, to shake off the yoke of Obedience, which is laid upon them by just Powers set over them.

For

Acts 5.29.

For if he himself, without any scruple, was content to submit and conform to those *Ceremonies*, which he knew he was to fulfil so as to put an utter end to them; how ill will it become any his Disciples, out of wilfulness or pretended weakness, to disturb the Peace of a *Church* and *State*, whereof they are members, by refusing Obedience to the lawful Commands of lawful Superiors? And such are all commands, where God himself has not in his Word expressly forbidden or directly bid the contrary; for it is in that case only, where we are to *obey God rather than men*, namely, when God has commanded one thing, and the Magistrate commands another.

In the whole story of our Saviour's *Life*, in the whole account of his *Doctrine*, we find nothing to countenance Rebellion or Schism. And in his *Apostles* writings and carriage, there is no one thing more preſt by them, nor any one thing was more practised by the primitive Christians, then *Obedience* to the *Civil Powers*.

It is true, that, whilst Governments and Governours remained *Heathen*, in *religious* Affairs they kept to their own Rules, and rather chose Martyrdom and the worst of Terms then a sinful Compliance with heathenish and idolatrous Worships. But when the *Emperours* once submitted their Diadems to the Cross, and the *civil States* imbraced the *Christian Faith*, then they as readily yielded their Obedience to their *Christian Princes* in the external Administrations of *Worship*, as before they had absolutely refused it to *Heathen* Governours.

1 Tim. 6.1, 2.

So far is *Christianity* from discharging *Subjects* from their *Obedience* or destroying of *civil Rights*: which appears by *S. Paul* in stating the Condition of *Servant-Converts*, that their Conversion alter'd indeed their *spiritual* Property, but not their *Civil*, nor so much as slackned, much less broke or untied their Bands, but rather girded their Obligations faster and closer about them. The *Fellowship of Saints* did not make them fellows well met with their Masters; who though Partners in Church-Privilege, yet in civil Converse were to know and keep their distance, and to serve them with the greater diligence upon the very account of their *spiritual* Relation.

We are come at last from Christ's *Asseveration*, that he came *not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it*: to the *Caution*, he gives; which, though set before it, is grounded upon it, that therefore we would *not think* he came to destroy it.

The *Jews*, his Country-men, had two great scandals against him; the *one* raised from the meanness of his *Person*; the *other* from the seeming Novelty of his *Doctrine*, which both thwarted that notion and expectation they had of the *Messias*.

Isa. 53.3.

They looked for one, who should reign among them as a temporal Prince, and by his Prowess free them from the *Roman* yoke; little thinking, that the end of his coming was to suffer, for which reason God sent him in that mean Disguise; nor understanding the Character, which their very Prophets gave him, who represented him as *a man of sorrows*, and intended the Glories and Triumphs of his Kingdom, which they describe in a *Spiritual* sense.

Again, they had that Veneration for *Moses* and those *Ceremonies* of *Worship*, by which they saw themselves differenced from all the *Heathen* world, that whoever offered an affront to him, or that which they called his *Law*, or design'd the least alteration therein, they lookt upon him as a capital Offender; insomuch that any one, who came in the name



name of a *Prophet*, was upon this account, as we heard out of *Maimonides*, to be ston'd to death. But herein also their mistake was as great; for *Christ* and *Moses* were very well agreed, nor had he any design of altering the *Law*, but only reforming those Abuses, and restoring it from those Misconstructions, wherewith Time and vicious Customs had overgrown it.

As to this *Objection*, our *Text* is the main place (*Munster* tells us) that the *Jews* make great advantage of against us *Christians*, that *Christ's* sayings and doings do not agree. Their Ceremonies, as *Circumcision*, *Purifications*, *Choice of meats*, *Sacrifices*, and the *Judicial Law*, were all taken away upon his coming; yet he says point blank, *I came not to destroy the Law*; whereupon they charge him with a lie. Further it is said, *Thou shalt not add or diminish*, &c. But he did both; *Deut. 12.32*; therefore he was a false Prophet. We answer

1. *First*, That *Christ* himself, as hath been made appear, did neither in his *Person*, nor his *Doctrine*, abolish any of their Laws. But then, say they, though he did not, his Followers did; and such was the *Evangelical* Constitution, that the setting up of that was necessarily the overthrow of the other. Again then

2. As to matter of *Fact*, it was not so. They stood together for some good while, after *Christ's* departure, till the Zeal of the *Jews*, who would have forced them upon the *Gentiles*, and the craft of some *Hereticks*, who complied with the *Jews* to save themselves from persecution, made it necessary to lay them aside. And hence rose *S. Paul's* animosity, pursuant to the order of Council, *Acts 15*.

3. *Christ's* Religion did and doth preserve the Substance, and answer the End of all their *Laws*, even the *Ceremonial*. For the force of the Law, take it together, consists in these two things, the Love of God, and the Love of our Neighbour. Upon these two hang the whole Law *Matth. 22.40*; and the Prophets. To believe in God, to fear him, to trust in him, &c. this is the truth of Worship; and nothing more then *Charity* is the fulfilling of the Law. *Rom. 13.10*.

As to the rest, the *Rituals* were but temporary and external Institutions, no further acceptable, then as they were helps and expressions of those other, which were always lookt upon by the pious to be the weightier things of the Law. Thus their *Sacrifices* were types of *Christ's* Death, and Emblems of Mortification; their *Purifications* were signs of inward purity, and *Circumcision* it self was to be that of the Heart; *Rom. 2.29*; since he's not a *Jew*, who is only so outwardly; and the Promise was made to *Abraham* himself, while he was yet in *Uncircumcision*. *Rom. 4.10*.

Then as to the *Moral Law*, he reform'd and refin'd it indeed, (as we have shew'd before) but this cannot be thought so much as an *Alteration*, much less a *Destruction* of it, but a Restoring of it rather to its true Purposes and primitive Integrity; for coming to restore *Human nature*, it was necessary for him to clear the *Law* first.

4. The *Prophets* themselves, who were *Expositors* of the *Law*, give testimony to *Christ* in this Reformation.

Thus

Isa. 1. 11. 16. Thus *Esay*, To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices? I am full, &c. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to do evil, learn to do well.

Hos. 6. 6. Thus *Hosee*, I will have Mercy and not Sacrifice, that is, Mercy rather than Sacrifice, and the knowledge of God before burnt Offerings.

Jer. 7. 22, 23. And in the like manner *Jeremy* tells them, that God did not speak to their Fathers about Sacrifices at their departure out of Egypt, but to hear his Voice, and he would be their God, and they should be his People; which are the Terms of the New Covenant; the Tenour of which is, that God would put his Law in their Heart; intimating that the Worship of the *Messias* should be in Spirit and in Truth.

Jer. 31. 33.

John 4. 23.

Mic. 6. 9.

And *Micah* gathers all the business of Religion into this, What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Deut. 18. 15. Lastly, *Moses* himself resigns up his Chair to *Christ*, where he says, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up from among your Brethren like unto me, hear him; and yet *Christ* was so tender of a seeming in-

Marth. 23. 2, 3. croachment, that he acknowledges the *Pharisees* to sit in his Seat, and recommends them to the Peoples due regards.

And so much in answer to the *Jews*, who being Enemies of *Christ*, no wonder they should quarrel at his Doctrine, as the overthrow of their Law; when we find some *Christians*, who have pretended to be his strictest Followers, to own and avow this very Opinion.

The *Antinomians* upon this account throw off the Authority of the Moral Law it self, and disclaims its obligingness: but by what Authority they do this, is not easie to find in the Gospel it self. For our Saviour here utterly denies that he came with any such intent; and bids us take heed of fancying any such thing: and his Apostle, though very earnest in his Dispute against any ones being justified by it, yet plainly disowns the laying of it aside. What, says he, do we therefore make void the Law? no; we rather establish it.

Rom. 3. 31.

Gal. 3. 19.

1 Tim. 1. 9.

True it is, the Law was given because of Transgressions; and thereupon it is, the Apostle says, The Law was not made for the righteous; that is, it was not made for their sakes, who resolve to be good without it; and it was not made to condemn them; and this plainly appears from that Enumeration of the most capital Offenders, which immediately follows, Murderers of Fathers and Mothers, &c. So that, if a man keep himself from such crimes, he's out of the reach of the Law. It was not made for the Righteous then, that is, it was not made against them; as he says elsewhere, Against such as these there is no Law, they need not fear its damning Power. What he says of the Magistrate, may as truly be said of the Law; Wouldst not thou be afraid of the Law? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.

Gal. 5. 23.

Rom. 13. 3.

And though in the business of Justification, it have no immediate causality, yet that it hath a strong, though a remoter influence, is made out by this; that, as our Persons are to be justified by Faith, so our Faith it self is to be justified by our compliance with the Law, in what it requires of us; which, though not the Cause, is at least the Evidence of our Justification.

Else I know not how the two Apostles, S. Paul and S. James, will be reconciled. I speak now of the Law in a Christian sense, as it is taken in by *Christ* into his Religion, which we shew'd before, and not as opposite

posite to it upon the *Jewish* account, which on their side is the main ground of mistake. In the former sense S. *James* means it, in the later S. *Paul*.

What shall we say to the *Popish Doctors* and *Canonists*, who upon the pretended *Vicarship* ascribe such an extravagant power to the *Pope* as *Christ* no where challenges, nor is competent to the *Almighty* himself, that he can dispense with all *moral* obligations; that he can make *virtue* vice, and *vice* virtue; and that *perjuries*, *murders*, and the worst of *crimes*, by his allowance, are no sins; nay, if in the cause of Religion, and for the service of *Holy Church*, they become meritorious? What shall we say to them, but what the Prophet saith in the like case? *Isa.* 5. 20. *Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil.*

Nor must we pass by a sort of men among our selves.

As to our *Dissenters*, they argue from *Christ's* putting an end to the *Ceremonial* Law, that therefore they are absolved from all obedience to *Ceremonies* imposed; and that this is their *Christian Liberty*, to which Gal. 5. 11 they are oblig'd to stand fast.

They might as well reason from the abolition of their *Judicial Law* also, that they are freed from their *civil* obedience.

Can God be serv'd without *Ceremony*? And is not there a vast difference betwixt the *Ceremonies* of the *Jewish* and of our *Christian Church*? Those were *types* of *Christ* to come, and to retain them were in effect to deny *Christ's* being come. And the *Liberty* S. *Paul* speaks of, is that of the *Gentile Christians*, that they should not submit to the *Jewish* yoke, and has nothing at all to do in the case betwixt us. And must we now be so jealous of *Judaism*, that because they had a many *Ceremonies*, we must have none? At this rate of reasoning, because they had *Priests* and *Sabbaths*, we must have none.

For any other offence that may be taken against our *Rites* and *Usages*, either as to multitude or danger of *Superstition*, the *Church* herself has given that pious and prudent account, that all, who are pious and humble themselves, cannot but be satisfied; and truly where there's no *Humility*, I have learnt to question, whether there can be any sincere *Piety*. In the Preface to the Common Prayer-Book.

But let me ask them: did not our *Saviour* himself in these things conform to the present *Usages*, as he found them? did not he frequent their *Synagogues*? did not he observe an *Apocryphal Feast* appointed by that Church without any express Command of *Scripture* for it, or so much as mention of it in the *Canon*? Did he, though he instituted the two Sacraments of *Baptism* and the *Holy Supper* himself; did he give any order about *Ceremonies*, or trouble himself with them any further, then to leave such things to be order'd by the Discretion of the *Church*, and of those, he had appointed the *Rulers* and *Governours* of the Church?

Once more; see but what *Confusion* must follow from such a pretended *Liberty*, not only in publick Society, but even in private Families? For that *Liberty* which they allow themselves, to dissent from the *National Establishment*, and to practice other *Worships* of their own; will they allow the same *Liberty*, as in Conscience they ought, (for they have all alike the same plea of Conscience) I say, will they themselves allow that *Liberty* to their Dependents, I mean their *Wives* and *Children* and *Servants*? If they will not allow such a liberty in their own *Families*, where they have to do with the Government, neither ought they for the



Luke 12. 53.

same reasons to expect it from the *Publick*. If they do allow it, it is easie to foresee the Consequence; that 'tis like to be a very ill govern'd Family, where, according to our Saviour's expression, *the Father is against the Son, and the Son against the Father*, and so on; that where there are but *five* in all; no *two* of them shall agree. Now that which no prudent man would admit of in his own Company, I know not, why any should be so confident as to demand of the *Magistrate*.

But I shall not proceed in a longer dispute, but heartily pray to God so to incline our Hearts to *Peace* and *Obedience*, which were the great things he sent his *Son* to teach the World; that we may, as He came *not to destroy but to fulfill the Law*, so perform all Offices of *Justice* and *Love* to one another, and so agree in the *Service* and *Worship* of God, that *Religion* and *Laws* may still flourish in our Land, to the Honour of the *Government*, the Welfare of the *People*, and the Glory of the great God, to whom be Glory now and for ever. *Amen.*

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*Wisdom*

## *Wisdom Censured and Justified.*

A Sermon Preached at the Reading of *Thomas Walcot Esq;* in the *Inner Temple*, on *Quadragesima* Sunday, *Febr. 17. 1672.*

S. Luke VII. 33, 34, 35.

*For John the Baptist came neither eating bread, nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.*

*The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.*

*But Wisdom is justified of all her children.*



E are newly entered upon the Celebration of the *Quadragesimal Fast*, a time of that solemnity among the ancient Christians, and by them kept with so strict and devout an abstinence, that St. *Ambrose* seems to call his Christianity in question, that does not religiously observe it.

However the *Sundays* are not to be reckoned into the number of these *forty days*, agreeably to the *Canons of old Councils*, which make it little less than *heresie* to fast on that day of the week, on which our blessed Lord, raising his glorious head out of the grave, displayed his triumphs over the powers of Hell and the dominion of Death.

Beside this weekly *Festival* and this yearly *Fast*, the Church did of old, either in or near the very Apostles times, appoint several other *Fasts* and *Feasts*; as namely the *Quarterly Fasts* of the four *Ember Weeks* before *Ordination*, according to the Apostles own practice, who fasted Acts 13:3 and prayed upon such occasions; and the *Weekly Fasts* on those two days, on the one of which our Saviour was *betray'd*, and on the other *crucified*: and that in proportion to a common custom of the pious *Jews*, who fasted twice a week: For 'twas not the *Pharisees* fasting, but his boasting, which Christ finds fault with. Luke 18. 12.

And on the other hand for *Feasts*, the commemoration of some of the most illustrious Instances of our Redemption, to wit, the *Conception*, *Birth*, *Resurrection*, and *Ascension* of the holy *Jesus*, together with his sending of the *holy Ghost*: as also the Anniversaries of his *Apostles* and some few others of the New-Testament-*Saints*.

This short account I thought fit to give at the Entrance of my Discourse, in that these Institutions and Intermixtures of holy severities and pious festivities, of *fasting* and *feasting*, used down along from the earliest times of the Christian Church, carry in them some fair resemblance of the two great Examples here in the *Text*; of the *Baptist* and the *Son of man*; one whereof came in an austere way, *neither eating bread nor drinking wine*; the other came in a more familiar and sociable way of *eating and drinking*.

Praised be God, that *Christianity* is not sunk to so low an Ebb among us, but that we retain yet some umbrage of Pious Antiquity in these its solemn observances, though, to our shame, we fall very far short of it in our devotions.

Nay farther considering that, even then at the Commencement of the Gospel, our *Saviour* himself and his *Forerunner*, in this different course of life they took, were so rudely treated by the *Pharisees* and those of their party, and very likely by some of the Rabble too, that the one was reputed a *demoniack*, a mad distracted fellow, one out of his wits; and the other a *glutton* and a *wine-bibber*, a sensual person and a loose liver, an associate of *publicans and sinners*, one who kept the worst of company: it ought to be no wonder, if still, now at least in the dregs of time, amongst some of *Pharisaical* spirits, and others of *Atheistical* principles, the Churches *Ordinances*, and her *Officers* who dispense them, run the same risk of censure and obloquy, and meet with no better reception then our blessed Master and his Harbenger did.

And yet as then, so now, notwithstanding these vulgar cavils and brutish reproaches cast upon the ways and servants of God in the ministrations of the Church, the same *Apology* is still of force; that the divine *Wisdom* is justified of all her Children.

You see that the Words naturally fall into these three parts.

1. The Variety of divine *Methods*.
2. The Peoples peevish *Censure* of them.
3. A just *Defense* of them against that Censure.

1. The various *Methods* of God's addressing to the people: and that two ways.

1. In Church-*Ordinances* and Ministrations; *Fasting* and *Feasting*: *John* came neither eating nor drinking; the Son of man came eating and drinking: So to come is *vocabulum forense & politicum*; a term of Law and State. It implies Commission and Instructions. They came, that is, they were legally sent, and authorized, and ordered to do *what* they did and *as* they did.

2. In the qualifications of Church-*Officers*. *John* was an austere, retired, abstemious, melancholy man. *Christ* was a familiar, free, cheerful person, of a debonair conversation. The one came *neither eating bread nor drinking wine*; the other came *eating and drinking*. For so to eat bread and drink wine in Scripture language signifies to live cheerfully.



II. The peoples forward and toward *Censure* of divine methods. They say of *John*, *he has a devil*, or as the *Eastern* Translations render it, *The devil is in him*; he is possess'd with a *Saturnine* spirit, is troubled with a *hypocondriack* distemper; or *he has a devil*, he deals with the devil, lives by sorcery, loving to be alone, and shunning all converse. Again, of *Christ* they say, *Behold!* They point at him as a scandalous Minister. Look! here's a fine *Messias* indeed, a singular Prophet, a *glutton*, &c. You may know what he is by the company he keeps, by his comforts and followers; a *friend*, &c.

III. The *Vindication* of God's Methods against these misprisions and calumnies, and a wise and potent Reply to these no less weak and frivolous, then bold and confident suggestions; that for all these vile exceptions against these heavenly Commissioners, and their way of coming; 'tis *wisdom*, and such a wisdom as is *justified*, and that by those who are best able, and the only fit persons to justify her, *her children*; and that not by one or two, or some few of them only, but with an universal consent, *by all her children*. But *wisdom is justified of all her children*.

Of these several parts I shall treat with as much brevity and plainness, as so fertile and so prejudiced an argument will admit of.

I. And *first* as to the variety of God's *Methods*: and that

1. *First* in the *Church-economy*, particularly in appointing *Fasts* and *Feasts*. I have already given you a short account of them. I shall not trouble you with a deduction, at what time and upon what occasion each *Fast* and *Feast* were instituted, though in that I might easily be befriended by some industrious hands that have laboured in this argument. Nor yet shall I by repeating crudely the rational grounds of those different *institutions*, slur the merit of those several worthy Writers of our own, that have already perform'd that task to their own praise and to publick satisfaction.

I shall rather choose briefly to inquire into the reason why our Saviour and his Forerunner came in so contrary a way, and took such a different course of applying themselves to the people.

*S. John* withdrew into solitude, used himself severely, to a course habit, a mean diet, and a solitary abode. *Christ* contrariwise engaged into throngs, conversed with multitudes, dwelt in famed Towns and populous Cities, walkt about in *Galilee* of the Nations, went up to the City at the Feast, at which time *Jerusalem* was by the confluence of Jews out of every Nation under Heaven, become the very Theatre of the world, associated himself to the *οἱ πολλοί*, the most and the worst of men, eat and drank familiarly and indifferently, and accepted of invitations to a wedding, *John* 3. to *Zachaus*, to *Matthew*, both Publicans, refus'd not the Pharisees call in the very next verse, making entertainments himself, treating whole multitudes, and feasting four thousand with seven loaves, and five thousand at another time with five loaves; and yet both of them gave testimony to one another.

*S. Chrysostome* gives this account of that different way they took, fetching a similitude from Huntsmen, that do *indagine cingere* (*glvas*), compass their prey round, some with a full merry cry rousing and driving them out of their coverts, whilst others lie in ambush and set nets to intercept them in their speed, or take a convenient stand in private to make their shot. Thus our Saviour beat up game in the open field, and *John* the Baptist in his retirement laid wait for the souls of men; yet with this difference, that these spiritual arts of hunt are intended to save, and not to destroy what is taken.

And

Mark 2.19.

And this explication, I confess, is agreeable enough to the sense of the place, and fairly comports with the context; yet this does not come home to the question, nor solve the *Phænomenon* of the Text, for that would have been, had they changed their parts, and *John* come *eating and drinking* (as *Christ* did,) and *Christ* come *neither eating nor drinking*, (as *John* did.) We must then make a more close inquiry, and with *S. Chrysostom's* huntsmen, trace out the meaning, why the *Baptist* had the *Fasting* part assign'd him, and the *Son of man* the *Feasting* part: and surely our Saviour himself hath given us the true account of the difference, where he answers that question, why *John's* Disciples fasted oft, but his Disciples never kept strict fast; says he, *Can the children of the bridechamber fast whilst the bridegroom is with them?* *John* lived in the confine of the Law and Gospel, in the twilight of the *legal* administration, and in the dawn of the *Evangelical*. Now as the terrors of the Law are to drive penitent sinners to, and fit them for an acceptance of Gospel promises: so *John* the harbinger and forerunner of the *Messias*, who came to prepare his way before him, preached the Baptism of Repentance, and therefore an austere life became him: But the *Son of man* bringing salvation, and proclaiming the glad tidings of the Gospel, was to come in a more chearful gladness way of Feasting. The *Baptist* preached penance, the *Son of man* proclaim'd salvation, and gave absolution to the penitents. It was fit then that *John* and his Disciples should fast, his time being but the *μετανοια*, the fasting *Eve* of the Gospel, that great *Feast* of fat things: And it was as fit that *Christ* and his Disciples should not fast, whilst the Bridegroom was in presence. And again, it is no less fit that the succeeding Church should both *feast* often in remembrance of the Bridegroom, and the great benefits he has made us partakers of, and *fast* often in that the Bridegroom is taken from us; and thus Ecclesiastical order has checkered the year with *Fasts* and *Feasts*. Those for the humiliation of our selves; These for the exaltation of our God. Those for a sorrowful confession of our sins; These for a thankful acknowledgment of his blessings. Those to mortifie the flesh; These to quicken the spirit. Those in sympathy with our Saviour's sufferings; These in compliance with his triumphs. Should the Church injoin us nothing but *Fast*, then Christianity would indeed be, as some reproach it, a melancholy thing, that dispirits men; should she have prescribed all *Feast*, then Religion would look like a Rant, and an airy design of a loose life. But now to ballance our godly sorrows and our pious joys, to counterpoise and exercise alike our humility and our gratitude both, we have holy rejoicings and holy abstinences mixt, that on the one hand we may pass our Purgatory here by afflicting our selves and by severe works of mortification; and that on the other hand, we may have some foretastes of Heaven by spiritual antepasts and early anticipations of future joys.

And this for the *Church-economy*.

2. Then for the different qualifications of *Church-Officers*; wherein give me leave to take the words in the full latitude as they may bear, both as to natural *tempers* and moral *attainments*, and acquired *parts* and spiritual *gifts*. God has diversified his *Officers* as much as his *Offices*, *πολυμερὲς ἢ πολυτρόπος*, in *several* parcels and in *several* manners of ministration dealing out his Spirit to every one according to the measure of faith, and makes use of all kind of humours, of all kind of parts, for the building up of his Church. The *melancholy* reserv'd Minister makes his

his profession awful to the rude multitude, whilst another of a more sanguine complexion, with an innocent freedom and a chearful complacency, recommends it to the better and more fashionable sort. Even the dull *phlegmatick* constitution may benefit the publick as much by the meek example of a harmless conversation, as the *choleric* with the activity of a fiercer zeal. The *bold* does well for disputes and reproofs, and with courage maintains the *Pass*, where Truth and Duty are like to be overrun; and shamefac'd *modesty* preserves virtue in the persons self, and commends it to others. Ones *Genius* has inclin'd him to *controversie*, and his course of study fitted him to tread in thorny paths: another delights in the smoother and easier way of *meditation*. One is a good *Text-man*, another a good *School-divine*, a third as useful as either of the other two, a good *Catechist*. *Paul* plants well, and *Apollos* does as good service, who waters, and God gives the increase still to them both. One is of a readier apprehension, another of a vaster and more retentive memory; One is of a profounder judgment, another of a quicker fancy and a smarter wit: and yet no one of these of more use perhaps then another. God bestows, *diversa dona*, divers gifts, but all to the same end. There are in this *Hierarchy* several capacities and several qualifications; varieties of *tempers* and *parts*, of *naturals* and *spirituals*, of *intellectuals* and *morals*, as well as different degrees of *order*: and all like the members of our bodies, have their several use and imploy.

II. But some perhaps will say, we have here a *defence* made before we hear the *charge*. What says the people? what say *Pharisees* and *Atheists* to all this? They are for neither one nor the other, but dislike and condemn all alike; they put in a *Caveat* against *John* the faster, and another against the *Son of man* the feaster. They'l neither *dance* after the Churches piping, nor *weep* when she mourns; as 'tis in the verse before the Text. Let this variety of divine *methods* be never so sincerely intended for their good, and never so discretely managed; they reject and quarrel them, and not only so, but scoff and revile those who administer them. For if *John* come *neither eating nor drinking*, let the Church prescribe *Fasts* to be observ'd, they cry out, with a devillish calumny, *He has a devil*: nay, and they have Scripture to prove what they say; 1 *Tim.* 4. 3. where commanding to abstain from meats is reckoned one of the *doctrines of devils*. But this was meant of a sort of Judaizing Hereticks, who beside some other errors, did according to the Jewish discipline, forbid some sorts of meat, as in their nature, unclean, and unlawful to be eaten. On the contrary, if the *Son of man* come *eating and drinking*, then presently they clap this reproach in his dish, *he is a glutton and a wine-bibber*; and they prove it too, by the company he keeps, he is a Companion of loose livers and notorious sinners: little heeding that prophecy, even whilst they fulfilled it, which tells them that the *Messias* should be *reckoned amongst transgressours*; with whom he conversed no otherwise, then as Physicians do with the sick, to cure and amend them of their maladies; and thus he was indeed a *friend* to the worst of sinners.

Let the Minister live recluse, keep at distance, and think that way to gain reverence to his profession, he falls under their *odium*, as a sullen ill-natur'd man. Let him be affable in his converse, his familiarity, instead of love, will procure him contempt. If he mind the dignity of his Function, he is a *proud Priest*; if he look after the rights of the Church, he is a *covetous Parson*; if he prostitute his Function and neglect his Rights, the people possibly will be well enough pleas'd with him, but laugh



laugh at him too into the bargain. It would look too much like a Scene of Levity, should I rake up more of such kind of stuff.

Psal. 64. 3.  
Wisd. 5. 12.

Verse 29.

But who were they that thus censured the Baptist & our Saviour? *Ye say.* They are *incerti auctores*, unknown authors; they have it from one another; 'tis got amongst the people, and now there's no stopping of it, nor tracing it neither. They shoot arrows, even bitter words, says the *Psalmist*; and the *arrow*, as it cleaves the air, the Wiseman tells us, leaves no track behind it. Such reproaches pass from hand to hand, till at last the story goes bare-faced, and then 'tis sufficient proof, Every body says so. But there was some body that taught every body to say so. Who were they? Look a little higher above the Text, *verse 20.* you will meet with them, the *Pharisees* and their gang. For that it was not all the people, appears, in that some of them had been baptized by *John*, and they justified God. Now the *Pharisees* were a strict Sect of extraordinary seeming purity: and 'tis plain 'twas their interest to have Christianity baffled; for they thought if that Doctrine, which preach'd up sincere honesty, should get credit in the world, they should not be able to maintain their starchy formality and well dissembled gravity, but would have the vizard of their hypocrisie pull'd off. For the *people*, why they should take up a reproach and a prejudice against God's ways and his Church, I shall offer three grounds of this their unreasonable humour: partly the *unsoundness* of Judgment, partly the *wickedness* of Heart, and partly the *giddiness* of Spirit.

1. First, I say this contempt of Church-ordinances and methods proceeds from an unsound ungrounded Head. They were never catechized into a due reverence of the Church. The Foundations and Principles of Christianity were not well laid. Hence it is that *culpant quæ ignorant*, they find fault with what they do not understand, and with the confidence of their censures think to palliate their own ignorance, whilst they quarrel at those things which that very ignorance of theirs should teach them to admire; so true is it, that Wisdom hath no greater Enemies then those who are least acquainted with her.

2. A profane, carnal, worldly Heart sets them against the Church and her Orders and her Officers. *Fasts* do not relish well with a carnal appetite, nor do our *Festivals* well agree with worldly interest. But this is nothing to those *Scepticks*, who together with the *Church* throw off all the business of Religion, and prophanelly call *Scripture*, *God* himself, and their own *Soul* in question. And such as these are more then a good many in the world. And these men must needs slight all Church-order, and censure the long Robe as a solemn Cheat, for imposing upon others belief and practice those things, which by the consequence of that little reason their deboshed understanding has left them, the Magistrate and Minister themselves must be Fools, if they themselves believe them.

Psal. 53. 13.

1 John 2. 19.

Psal. 119. 99,  
100.

3. A giddy and a restless Spirit puts them upon continual changes, that they cannot like what has been, nor brook the ancient customs and usages of the Church. I would, as the *Psalmist* does, compare them to a *Wheel*, but that they never come back to the same point, which is one property of circular motion. They are gone out from us, as *S. John* says, and they'l to *Rome*, or any whither, rather then return to the bosom of their forsaken mother the Church. And this whim arises from a spiritual pride. They can say with *David*, I am wiser then my teachers; and truly that we need not grudge them; such teachers they may have had: and yet no great credit for them neither. But when they go on to say, as *David* doth, I am wiser then the Ancients and Fathers of the Church, then

then their arrogance grows unsufferable. They falsely charge the Church with superstition and will-worship in her *Fasts* and *Feasts* and other Institutions, while their own religion in all its divisions (to speak it with pity, not reproach) is nothing else but superstition and will-worship, as being grounded upon no authority, either of God and Man, devised and taken up meerly upon their own fancy. They cry out upon *Popery* in our Rites and Ceremonies, while themselves pretend to that which is the very fundamental point and characteristick mark of Popery an *Infalibility* of Spirit, though it lead them, as it has done those others, into contradictive errors. These are not for obeying the Church, but for setting up other Churches against her, nor to be govern'd by any wisdom but their own. But the true *wisdom*, by which the Church has through all ages govern'd her self and her children, will maugre the pride and breez of all *Pharisaical* Separatists, be able still to *justify* her self, which is our *third* and last stage.

III. *But wisdom is justified of all her children.* The popular censure is here answered with a vulgar proverb; for so our Saviour delighted to speak to the people. And if I be not mistaken, it hath much-what the same meaning as that *Latin* axiom, *Cuius artificii in sua arte credendum*, every Artist is to be trusted and credited in his own Art. Any sorry Mechanick will laugh at one, if he have no insight in his Mystery, that offers to censure his work. But this Maxim being applied to God's all-wise disposal of affairs in the government of his Church, has a peculiar energy. The people may censure and say as they please; they are not competent Judges. 'Tis a small thing to be judg'd by mans day, as the Apostle tells us *1 Cor. 4. 3.* at least these are inferiour Courts, and the Sentence passes for nothing, unless it be ratified above. But 'tis God himself sits Judge in the high Court of Appeals; and if we can acquit ourselves there, 'tis no great matter what the people say.

I. First then 'tis *Wisdom*. This variety of methods and qualifications is wisely design'd; and that upon these following accounts.

1. First, *for edification of the Church.* The Church has several graces to be exercised, and therefore there must be as several dispensations to excite and imploy those graces. *Feasts* to express thankfulness, to exercise hospitality, and to imploy charity, in sending portions to the poor, and to raise the mind to a blessed contemplation of those spiritual blessings in heavenly places, wherewith God hath blest us in Christ; and to stir us up to an imitation of the virtues and holy lives of the Apostles and other his Saints, whose births and martyrdoms we commemorate. *Fasts* to express our humility, and to help us in the necessary work of repentance, in mortifying the flesh with the lusts thereof, and to prevent impending judgments. Again, the people are of various humors and inclinations, and must as variously be applied to. Christ styles us *fishers* Marth. 4. 19. of men, and ye know all fish are not to be caught with the same bait. And when we have used all the Art we can, this Angling trade requires a patient attendance and a melancholy expectation. Some are taken with Rhetorick and quaint expressions; with others plain hearty discourse is more powerfully prevailing: some are aw'd into acts of piety, with an austere carriage, whom fair means could do no good on; others are won over with courtelie and affability, who if roughly dealt with, would fly off. Thus it pleases God in his several gifts to attemper himself to the peoples dispositions, and what his eminent Instrument *S. Paul* says of himself, *1 Cor. 9. 22.*

to become *all things to all men*; that by all means he may gain some.

2. *For decency and ornament.* This variety is seemly and becoming. The *Sponſes* veſts, *Pſal.* 45. 14. are imbroidered *opere polymittario*, or, as the *Vulgar* reads it, *circumamicta varietatibus*, like *Joſeph's* coat, bedeckt with ſeveral colours, and made up of ſeveral pieces and tallels. This uniform multiformity of diſpenſations ſets forth the riches of God's contrivance, whileſt the ſame bleſſed Spirit conveys himſelf to the Church in ſo many various forms of ordinances and miniſtrations, as an unexhausted Spring emptying it ſelf into innumerable pipes. *There are diverſities of gifts, of adminiſtrations, of operations, but the ſame Spirit, which worketh all in all*, *1 Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6. God could have modelled the work and covering of the *Tabernacle* to have been all of one piece; but he employed ſundry Arts about ſundry Materials, and inſpired the Workmen with ſkill, and furniſhed them with invention. The *School-divine* does the Smiths work, he faſtens the Sockets, and ſets up the Pillars, and drives home the Nails; whileſt the ſprucer *Oratour* carves the Imagery and trims the Fringes, and hangs the Holy Court round with the gaudery of beautiful Curtains. Thus with great variety of operations God's work is at laſt ſtrongly and handſomly compleated and brought about.

3. *For peace and good order.* For how can it be, but this variety muſt prove a great ſatisfaction to people, if any thing may ſatiſſie them, and win their affections into a willing compliance and delight in the ordinances and miniſtry of the Church, where in that great diverſity they cannot miſs of ſomething that may pleaſe them even in their natural inclinations; and if their affections be in any tune, they will meet with ſome *key*, ſome *ſtring*, in this *Church-harmony*, compoſed of ſo many different *notes*, that will ſtrike *unifon* to their ear and heart?

Further, as to the *Officers* themſelves, God has ſprinkled his gifts and made partial diſtributions, that thoſe of eminent parts might not ſcorn and deſpiſe their inferiours, and thoſe of meaner qualities might not be out of heart and envy their ſuperiours. If one could do all the buſineſs, there would be nothing left for the reſt to do. This reconciles Church-Officers into a harmony of working; whileſt the beſt is not furniſht with all accompliſhments, and the meaneſt is not left quite deſtitute. Every one has his place and his uſe; nor can any ſay to the other,

*1 Cor.* 12. 21. *I have no need of thee.*

But if the people will not be pleaſed with ought that God can do, if they will after all wilfully reject his counſel, fruſtrate and quarrel his methods; yet again 'tis God's *wiſdom* to ſuffer this ill humour of the people, that he may render them inexcusable, and juſtifie himſelf when he judges; *What could I have done to them, which I have not done?* and that the Church may be exerciſed with perſecution, which is her portion here in this life, (and *S. Paul* hath told us that a *ſcoff* is a perſecution) and that her *Officers* may ſtand upon their guard, and look about them, with care and courage attending their charge.

*Iſa* 54.

*Gal.* 4. 29. conferred with  
*Gen.* 21. 9.

Nay further ſtill, ſhould theſe *Officers* themſelves be in fault, and they commit diſorders, whoſe duty 'tis to prevent and redreſs them, 'tis *wiſdom* in God to ſuffer that too: to ſhew that 'tis his work they are about, and not mans, to bring Souls to God; and that the efficacy of the Ordinances doth not depend upon the worth and ability of the Inſtrument, but upon the power of his gracious Spirit which accompanies and virtuates his own Inſtitutions.

II. This



II. This Wisdom is justified, *iniquis*, in the Indefinite Tense. It has been all along justified, is still, and will be to the end of the world. Nay, 'tis sufficient to justify it self, according to the *Hebraism*, where the *Passive* many times is put for the *Reciprocal* Conjugation. Wisdom, like light, needs no *medium* to prove it by, but convinces gain-sayers with a bare appearance. But we shall make it out these three ways.

1. 'Tis approved by Scripture and Reason. The solemnities of fasting and feasting are commanded and commended in the word of God: besides the great use and advantage is made of them, that they are Incentives to Devotion, the ornaments of Religion, that make it splendid and venerable, the Seals of its grand Articles and Records of the most important Truths, finally Preparations for and Representations of everlasting Joys, and the future Blessed state, where there will be continual Feasting, yet neither eating nor drinking. Again, the diversity of gifts and attainments has been shew'd to be useful and necessary for the service of the Church.

2. 'Tis made out by the constant practice of the Church, both in Old and New Testament. I need name but our Lord himself, who in an extraordinary and miraculous manner fasted forty days and forty nights, and in the ordinary course of his life was frequently at Feasts, and honour'd with his presence an *Apochryphal* one, no where commanded, or so much as mention'd in the Canon, *viz.* the Feast of Dedication. And now let the Adversaries of our Church disparage, as they please, our *Fasts* and our *Feasts*, since they themselves, when they were in power, sufficiently justified her authority and prudence in such Institutions, had she appointed them of her self, and not received them down, as she has, from primitive times; I say they sufficiently justified her by appointing their own days of *Humiliation* and *Thanksgiving*, when they fasted for strife, and gave thanks for blood. And as to different tempers and qualifications in the Officers, all Church-history affords us a world of examples. *Moses* the meekest man, and *Elias* hot-spirited; yet both great Prophets, both attending on the holy *Jesus* at his Transfiguration. *Peter* in his nature very confident, and *Thomas* as distrustful; yet both Apostles. Here in the Text *John* austere, the *Son of man* sociable; the one the Angel of the Covenant, the other the Messenger before his face.

3. It is made good by answerable success: These various methods have gain'd multitudes of Profelytes to Heaven, giving infinite instances of the conversion of sinners by these different means. Under this œconomy both the *Jewish* and the *Christian* Church flourished. And even in this sense *Wisdom is justified by her children*; that is, by her fruitfulness, by bringing forth many children, of which she has her Quiver full, that she needs not be ashamed, when she speaks with her enemy in the gate; for *her children* will stand up for her, and take her part. Which is our *third* step.

Psalm. 127.9.

III. 'Tis justified by her children. If other arguments *de jure* will not do it, if rational Topicks fail, here's an inartificial argument, a Testimony *de facto*, a whole cloud of witnesses, may clear the Case. But who are these Witnesses, *The children of wisdom*? To know that, we must first know, what this *wisdom* here spoken of is: 'Tis, as I said before, in the proverb sure meant for skill and an exact knowledge and

perfect understanding in any thing : and that must be judged and tried properly by none but such as are themselves skilfull and intelligent in that thing : as *Physicians* can give the best account of Medicine ; and so in every Profession and Employment. But this is too large a sense, being here particularly accommodated to God's methods. We shall therefore take it these *three* ways.

Prov. 3. 17.  
Wisd. 5. 3.

1. For the essential and uncreated wisdom ; and so the *children of wisdom* are the children of God, those that are like God as children to their father : wise as he is wise ; and who so fit to justify wisdom as the wise ? Blind men cannot distinguish between light and darkness ; but they that belong to the Father of Lights can : for they are illuminated, and are the *children of light*. Fools and Idiots may find fault with the ways of wisdom ; but the children of wisdom justify them to be rational and pleasant ways. Wicked men thought godly ones fools and mad men, but at last they find themselves to have been so.

Psal. 111. 10.

2. For *Religion* ; for so the *fear of God*, which is nothing but religion, is called *the beginning of wisdom*, I and the end too, the whole *Summa totalis* ; for so *חֵסֶד* may signifie. Then the *children of wisdom* are the professors of Religion, those that have been nursed and bred up as children in Religion ; as *מִדֵּי יִתְפָּוּ*, that have studied and practised Physick. And who fitter to judge of matters of Religion, then they who have been trained up in it, and experimented it ? *Procul hinc, procul ite profani* ; the prophane and irreligious have nothing to do here. *Hereticks, Jews, Turks, Infidels*, are strangers to the true Religion, and what they say amounts to nothing. We are to hear what the *children* say.

Matth. 11. 19.

3. For the Church. And thus the *Wise man* pronounces them blessed that watch daily at her gates, waiting at the posts of her doors, *Prov. 8.* 34. and so the *children of wisdom* are the true *sons of the Church*, those who have been gathered and brooded under the Churches wings, at whose new birth the Spirit moved and fluttered upon the baptismal water ; and who have been bred up in an exact obedience to, and perfect compliance with Church-order and discipline. These sure can give the best testimony of her from their own knowledge and experience ; especially the *Officers* of the Church, the Planters and the Waterers, the ancient Fathers and Doctors, who have left upon record their testimonies, and transmitted them to Posterity. The *Schismatick* then, who has cut himself off from the Communion of the Church, has no vote in this business : and least he should take advantage from *S. Matthew*, who delivers it only by *her children*, and not by *all her children*, to say, that some of her children do indeed justify these usages, but some that do not, that think themselves at liberty to use them, or not to use them, to fast and feast as they list, not as the Church appoints, may be nevertheless children, *S. Luke* spoils this Sectarian pretense, by making that Proposition *Universal*, which the other Evangelist had left *Indefinite* : he tells us that *All the children* of wisdom justify her. Which is the *fourth* and last gradation of the Reply.

IV. 'Tis justified by *all her children*. Those then that do not justify her are to be lookt upon as none of her children ; which is the thing that *S. Austin* expressly affirms of one part, and we may, *à pari*, apply it to the other, that He who does not keep the *Feasts* of the Church, says he, (and there is the same reason for her *Fasts* ) is no Son of the Church. Here is an universal consent, and a concurrent testimony of all Ages, of all

all Countries, of all Persons that have ever belonged to the Church, to justify and make good her several administrations.

But here again the *Atheist* will answer all this with one scoff, and invalidate the testimony, by saying this sacred *Adage* implies no more than *Birds of a Feather*; and that this is not a fair evidence, but a combination, the children being all of a party with the mother. To this I answer briefly, That though there never have been wanting wicked men in the world, and great quantities of them too; and there have been in all ages people enough Atheistically dispos'd, yet it will be impossible for him to shew such an evidence, and produce as many witnesses (though the most of men have been alway likely the worst) for his abominable Error, as we can for the Truth; though could he do so, that would not do. For again, I do not altogether build upon *Tradition*, but when the consentient testimonies of all ages are grounded upon Scriptural wisdom, I do judge *Tradition* to be a proper and useful Instrument of probation to assert the Rites and Customs of the Church. To conclude, 'tis no less then Fanatick frenzy or Atheistical madness, to decry and bespatter those Institutions, to disbelieve and disuse what the glorious company of the *Apostles*, the goodly fellowship of the *Prophets*, the noble army of *Martyrs*, the reverend *Fathers*, the learned *Doctors*, and ancient *Writers* of the Church, those great Champions of *Truth*, and Examples of *Piety*, have deposited with us, having consign'd it in their writings, and seal'd it with their blood; what the *Church* throughout the whole world doth acknowledge, what the intire communion of *Saints* that have gone before us hath constantly own'd and successfully observed: whose holy examples that we may follow in submitting our selves to the various dispensations of the Spirit, and the wholsom ordinances and appointments of divine wisdom in the Church, that we may be so benefited and improved by these means of grace here, that we may with them be made partakers of the heavenly glory hereafter; the alwise God, the Father of Lights and Fountain of Wisdom, and God the Son, the Wisdom of the Father, and the blessed Spirit of Wisdom of his infinite Mercy grant us for Christ his sake.

Of



*Of the two Holy Sacraments.*

A Sermon Preached at *Aſton*, at a Meeting of the  
Clergy, by Order of the Right Reverend  
Father in God, *HENRY* Lord  
Bishop of London, Oct. 7. 1678.  
With some Inlargements.

1 S. John V. 8.

*And there are Three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood; and these three agree in one.*

Joh. 19. 34. 35



*S*T. John having in the first and fifth verses of this Chapter asserted the *Divinity* and *Messiahship* of *Christ*, making that the great object and support of a Christian faith: in the sixth verse proves it by a considerable passage at his crucifixion, of which himself had been an Eye-witness, in the nineteenth Chapter of his Gospel, where also he takes a special notice of it in the historical relation, that at the stroke of the Souldiers spear there came forth *water* and *blood* out of his precious side, *verse 6.* *This is he that came by water and blood*, says he, *even Jesus Christ*: which he confirms by the additional testimony of the *Spirit*, to that of his own, which he had so solemnly quoted in his Gospel. *And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.*

Upon this mention of the *Spirit's* bearing witness, together with the *water* and *blood*, he takes occasion to bring in the whole *Record*, by way of parallel and comparison betwixt the *three heavenly* and the *three earthly witnesses*; that *As there are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the holy Ghost; and these three*, though distinct in their several personalities, yet *are one* in nature and essence, as well as in testimony, *verse 7.* so in this eighth verse, *there are three likewise, that bear witness on earth*, to wit, those three he had mentioned before, *the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood*, and *these three*, though they are not one, as the three others are, in identity and unity of nature, yet they *agree in one*; though they are not *unum*, they are *in unum*, to one purpose, in the consent and agreement of their testimonies.

These

These two Verses then lay open a glorious scene of those *Mysteries*, by which the *Christian Religion* is advanced above all other Religions in the World, and confirmed in it self to all true Believers; both as to *Doctrine*, and as to *Administration*.

The *Doctrinal* Mystery, that of the *Trinity of Persons* in the Unity of the Godhead, is that, which not only distinguishes us from *Jews* and *Heathens*, but influences all parts of Spiritual knowledge; insomuch that the *Apostles* in their *Creed* have made it the Summary of Christian Faith.

Nor is the other less *Mysterious*, the *administration* of the *Water* and the *Blood*, accompanied with the energy and efficacy of the *Spirit*, by whose applications the Mercies of the *Father*, and the Merits of the *Son*, are made over to pious Souls in the use of those Ordinances.

And each three of them, both those above, *Father*, *Word* and *Holy Ghost*, and these below, the *Spirit*, *Water* and *Blood*, bear the same Record, that our *JESUS* is the Son of God, and Saviour of Men, to the assurance of our *Faith*, to the security of our *Hope*, and to the ingagement of our *Charity*: These Three, the Persons I mean of the *Trinity*, having each had his particular concern and share in transacting our Salvation; the *Father* sending the *Son*, and both sending the *Holy Ghost*, and in witnessing and setting to their Seals to that New and better Covenant, whereof he was Mediator; and the two Ordinances of *Water* and *Blood*, by the assistance of the *Spirit*, being Signs, and not only so, but Conveyances of Christs Grace and Obligations of our Duty.

In the handling of the Words we shall observe this Method:

1. We shall shew what these *Three Witnesses on Earth* are, that is, what we are to understand by the *Spirit*, *Water* and *Blood*: to wit, as we have already explained it; the Two Sacraments virtuated by the efficacy of the *Spirit*.
2. We shall treat of the Nature and End and Use of these Two Sacraments, and how they are influenced by the *Spirit*.
3. What it is they bear Witness to, and in what manner they bear it.
4. How they are said to agree in one; or, more plainly, what one purpose it is, to which this threefold Testimony of theirs tends.
5. And lastly, We shall give some account, why the *Word* is not reckoned among these *Earthly Witnesses*, as well as the Sacraments.

1. For the *Witnesses*, what they are. God did not, even to the *Heathen* World, in the times of Ignorance, which had overspread and benighted far the greatest part of Mankind; yet then he is said, not to have left himself *undiscovered*, without Witness, making himself known A& 14. 17. in some measure, by his methods of *Nature*, and dispensations of *Providence*. But now, since the coming of his *Son*, there is another face of things, a new state of Affairs; Now we are in *Regno gratiæ*, translated Col. 1. 13. from darkness to light. Now there was need of another kind of *Witnesses*.

*Sun* and *Rain*, the dews and shines of Heaven and the fruits of the Earth; the blessings of Providence might serve the turn then, to make some imperfect discoveries of his Deity, his Power and his Goodness, and the invisible things of his Essence to the Children of men. Rom. 1. 20. But now that that *Mystery*, which had been hid from Ages, was in the fulness of Col. 1. 26. time revealed and made known; it was to be approved and confirmed to the

the unbelieving World with other kind of Testimonies, which were too to bear some proportion to that great Mystery, as being themselves also mysterious.

And such are the *Administrations* of *Grace* in the Church, by which the Divinity of the Man *JESUS*, and the design and work of our Salvation accomplished by him, were to be attested.

*Sun* and *Rain* were to be understood by ordinary capacities and were sufficient to convince them of a God: But to bear witness of a *Saviour*, here are brought in a mystical and surprizing way, the *Spirit*, the *Water* and the *Blood*, things and terms so mystical, that they surpass a Natural understanding.

Let us then try so to explain them, that at least they may be (as they are) discerned by an eye of Faith, and apprehended by an inlightned Reason, and made out experimentally to the Pious and Devout Souls of true Believers, who have their senses exercised therein.

Heb. 5. 14.

First, the *Spirit* here is undoubtedly the Holy and Blessed Spirit, and consequently the same, which in the former Verse is said to be one of the *Three*, that bear record in Heaven, to wit, the *Holy Ghost*; but yet, notwithstanding the word *Spirit* is not to be taken altogether in the same sense. There 'tis the *Person* of the *Holy Ghost* is meant, as distinct in subsistence from the *Father* and the *Word*, yet one in Essence with them. Here, by an usual *Metonymy* we are to understand the *Virtue* and Efficacy of the *Holy Ghost*, and not his *Person*. And therefore we find that glorious distinguishing Epithet here purposely left out, that 'tis simply said τὸ πνεῦμα, the *Spirit*, of the *Earthly Witnesses*; whereas the *Heavenly* one is styled τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, the *Holy Spirit*, the *Holy Ghost*. This *Spirit* below, an effect or rather an operation of that *Holy Spirit* above.

Matt. 3. 16.

Act. 2. 3.

As he is the *Heavenly Witness*, he bore his Record in *Person*, descending in a bodily shape, when in the likeness of a *Dove* he lit upon our Saviour at his being baptized, and when in *fiery cloven Tongues* he sate upon the whole Colledge of the Apostles at *Pentecost*. Again, as he is a *Witness* on *Earth*, he accompanies with his Presence, and virtues with his Evidence the *Institutions* and *Ordinances* of *Christ*. For since *Christ*s withdrawing from *Earth*, the *Spirit* is that ἄλλος παρακλησις, that *other Advocate* for *Christ*, that *other Comforter* for *Us*, whom he promised to send. I will send you ἄλλον παρακλησις, says he, *another Advocate* to testify of me, *another Comforter*, that ye may not be comfortless. He is the great *Witness* of *Truth*, the *Conveyancer* of *Grace*, and *President* in *Church Affairs*; whence that form is still continued in the *Ordination* of *Ministers*, *Receive ye the Spirit*; intimating, that as we of this Order in the discharge of our Offices act *under* him, so we should make it our request and endeavour, that we may be acted by him.

Joh. 14. 16.

Joh. 20. 22.

Now of that necessity is the Presence and Evidence of the *Spirit* for the enlivening of the *Ordinances*, and the assuring of our *Faith*, that without him the very *Water* and *Blood* are insufficient *Witnesses*, and cannot of themselves make a Record: which was the reason, that though the *Holy Spirit* be in order the last of the three *Heavenly Witnesses*, yet the *Spirit* here has the preheminance of place among the three *Earthly* ones. And for this reason also, beside others, I think it fit to speak of the *Water* and the *Blood* conjoynly, which is our next Inquiry, what is to be understood by them?

Water



*Water and Blood.* This is he who came by water and blood, even Jesus; he had said before. How is he said to come by them? that is, he perform'd his Priestly Office by the effusion of them, when the Launce opened his side and pierced his very heart, and there issued out water and blood. And what doth this shedding of his hearts blood, and of the water which was contain'd in the purse that inclosed his heart, bear witness to?

Certainly, that circumstance gave in a fair evidence of his death, that he was really dead. But that is not all: There were witnesses enough of his death, every body knew it; no one ever question'd it; his very adversaries were sure of that. There was something sure more than ordinary in this passage, that S. John in his Gospel relates it with that solemnity, and avers it with that earnestness, as one who stood by and saw it done; and that in his Epistle here he lays that stress upon it, that he makes the water and blood to be two of the witnesses, and joins them in commission with the Spirit. I cannot believe, that those Hereticks, who denied the humanity of Christ, and by consequence the reality of his death and sufferings, were either so considerable, or so early, that the Apostle should need to reflect upon them; and then he quotes it as a standing testimony, and that grounded upon his own single testimony too, since none of the other Evangelists report it. And what need was there of a standing testimony against an heresie, which hath been long since extinct?

Others therefore make it an Allegory, that the water signified Christ's purity and innocence, and the blood denoted his patience in his death and sufferings. I do not utterly disallow the interpretation. But why should an Allegory be admitted, where we look for a plain testimony? Besides, though Water do purifie and cleanse from filth, yet I know not whether it can be shewn any where directly to have that importance of purity: and as to Blood, that may indeed well enough betoken death and sufferings, but cannot, without some violence offered to the word, stand for the vertue or grace of patience in sufferings.

Give me leave therefore to be of that mind, as the Ancients were of, that this water and blood, that trill'd out of our blessed Lord's wounded side, represented the two Sacraments, as bequests of his dying heart to his people, and pledges of his dearest love to the Church; water for one, blood for the other. This sense is natural and easie, usual and proper in New-Testament style, especially seeing the Spirit is joyned with them both together, as it is elsewhere separately and apart: Thus, *Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, &c.* And *he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath life*: where he speaks of the Sacrament. And then, that we may not take it in a gross carnal way, he adds, and explains himself by bringing in the Spirit. *The flesh profits nothing, 'tis the spirit that quickeneth.* Nor must we omit, that this Sacramental water and blood are indeed standing witnesses, records that shall continue as long as Christianity, as long as the world shall last, as 'tis said of the Spirit also, the other witness, that he shall abide with us for ever.

This Water and Blood then are the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; which, when impregnated with the influences of the Spirit, are then competent witnesses for Christ to us, for us to Christ.

For unless the *Spirit* inliven these ordinances, and assure our hearts in our attendance upon them, they have no vertue, no comfort to administer to us of themselves.

And for this reason it is, that in the verse next but one before the *Text*, where 'tis said *that Christ came by water and blood*, the *Spirit* alone is said to bear witness; implying that without his attestation the testimony of the Water and Blood is invalid, and that 'tis his assistance makes them effectual and fit to be relied upon.

For what advantage is it to any one to have been *baptized*? what benefit to receive the *symbols*? if he have not the assurance of the *Spirit* witnessing with his spirit, that he is the child of God: For what is *Baptism* of it self, I mean as to the external form, but an admission into the visible Church? or the *Supper* of it self but a profession of Church-membership? But if this be all, what is it? 'Tis but an *outward* privilege, without the *inward* grace. Alas! many are in the Church, and yet are not of the Church: many profess Christianity, without being *Christians*. This is the case of too too many, I say; but 'tis their own fault: for the *Spirit*, as he is here joyned with the *Water* and the *Blood*, so he is ready to attend the administration of them; if we having been wash't with that *water*, endeavour to keep our selves clean, and if when we come to the *Table* to be partakers of that *blood*, we take care to come with that due preparation, as may fit us for the evidence and assistance of the *Spirit*.

So then by the *Water* here we are to understand *Baptism*, and by the *Blood* the holy *Eucharist*, and by the *Spirit*, the efficacy and operation of the *holy Ghost* accompanying the two *Sacraments*.

II. And here, which is our next business, we are briefly to deliver to you, the *Nature* and the *End* and *Use* of these Ordinances, and then to shew *how* they are virtuated by the *Spirit*.

The *Nature* of them is made out in that they are *symbols* and representations: the *End* and *Use* that they are *Means* of Grace, and *Pledges* of Glory on God's hand, and *Obligations* of Duty on ours.

In general, *Sacraments* are sacred Institutions, Rites and Ceremonies design'd for holy and spiritual purposes. Even in civil affairs, *Ceremonia da autorita al atto*, as the *Italian* Proverb speaks it; 'tis Ceremony that authorizes and ratifies things done in Law; as in *Bills* and *Bonds*, in passing of *Titles*, in giving *Livery* and *Seisin*, and the like.

In this general notion there may be many *Sacraments*. So the *Vulgar* Interpreter every where renders *μυστήριον* *Sacramentum*. Thus the Incarnation, God manifest in the flesh, he saith, is *magnum pietatis Sacramentum*. In this sense *Marriage* he styles a *Sacrament*, as representing the Union of Christ and his Church.

But this is a looser notion. The *Sacraments* are *Mysteries*; but every *Mystery* is not a *Sacrament*. And this appears to be the sense of the Church in her Catechism, *How many Sacraments? Two only as generally necessary to salvation*. She denies not but there may be more particularly necessary for particular persons; but upon the general account of Christianity, what concerns the body of the Church and Community of Christians, there are but two necessary to salvation.

Another limitation there is for *Sacraments*, that they must be *ordained by Christ*. Now there are none instituted by him but these; none necessary to salvation of Christians in general but these two.

And

And this, as most other things, in imitation of the Jewish œconomy. One in place of *Circumcision*, the other of the *Passover*. That of *Circumcision* performed on the eighth day. So the *dies lustricus* among the *Romans* and *Greeks*, when they gave the child a name. And before *Christ* instituted *Baptism*, the *Jewish* Profelytes were washed at their admission into that religion. That of the *Passover* was a type of *Christ* the Paschal Lamb.

*Baptism* was administred by *Christ's* Apostles before his *Passion*; but the full Commission was given at his *Ascent*, and was different from that of *John*, in that his baptism was rebaptized. The *Supper* he in person Acts 19. 5. appointed and himself administred, at his Paschal celebration; whence the absurdity of *Transubstantiation* appears, that according to that doctrine our blessed Lord broke his own body, and poured out his blood, before he actually suffered death upon the Cross. In particular as to their nature,

1. The *Sacraments* are *signs* and representations. So the Church has defined a Sacrament, *an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace*. Upon this account is required an *analogy* and proportion between the Things and Actions, representing and represented.

The sacred Elements; *Water* flowing from his heart, to wash off original corruption and actual filth. *Bread* for Body, *Wine* for Blood; that to strengthen, this to refresh.

The Sacramental Actions; *Immersion*, represents death to sin, *Emerfion*, rising up to newness of life: *breaking* the bread, *pouring* the wine, are instances of devout meditation upon *Christ's* sufferings.

This is not all. They not only represent but exhibit. This is the End and Use of them.

2. They are *Means* and conveyances of *grace*. At *Baptism* the holy Ghost fell upon them; and the two Disciples eyes were opened at the Luke 24. 31. breaking of bread, to discern the Lord's body. The Sacraments are the *Spirit's* Conduit-pipes for the conveyance of inward grace, and the Churches breasts of spiritual consolation.

The party baptized is acquitted from natural guilt; is adopted and intitled a child of God and member of *Christ*. In the Communion we eat his body, and drink his blood; and are mystically united to him.

This proceeds not from their own nature, but from the virtue and force of their institution, as they are ordain'd by *Christ*. As *Evidences* and *Deeds* in Law give a man as good a Title to *houses* and *lands* with their appurtenances, as if they were really included and presentiated in the Writings; and *Seisin* and *Livery* put a man into actual possession of an estate. So the *Sacraments* were appointed as a means of grace, *whereby we receive the same*.

Not that by these things our *natural* powers are altered, but that there is superadded a *moral* faculty and a *legal* right. As when a man is made *Mayor* or *Judge*, he ceaseth not to be Man, as he was before, but besides that he takes up a new figure or character. So a *Christian* in *Baptism* hath an indelible character put upon him of relation to *Christ*, which not heresie nor apostacy it self can obliterate, as the Reverend Dr. *Lucy*, late Bishop of *S. Davids*, hath learnedly and solidly prov'd. And in proportion the same may be affirmed of the other Sacrament also.

3. They are Pledges and Gages and Assurances of *grace*, of *pardon*, of *strength*, and of *acceptance*.



In the Office of *Baptism* the Church lays it down for a certain rule, that a child baptized that dies before it commit actual sin, is certainly saved. And the holy *Supper* is a recovery of the forfeitures we make after baptism; *tabula post naufragium*: and beside that, it is *arrha Spiritus*, an earnest of the Spirit.

4. They are obligations of duty. We promise in *baptism* to fight under Christ's banner. So S. Peter terms it the stipulation or *answer of a good conscience*. Hereupon the old forms of Interrogation are still retain'd, *Renuncias diabolo? &c.* The holy *Supper* is the renewing of our baptismal Vow: besides that 'tis *confractio*, the uniting of Christians in Charity; as the *bread* is made up of many grains, so Christ's body of many members.

This as to the *Nature* and to the *End* and *Use* of the Sacraments.

Now briefly to shew how they are virtuated by the *Spirit*: and that is

1. By his *assistance*. They are dry and insignificant things without him; unless he *sanctifie us to perform*, or *in the performing* our conditions in one and t'other Sacrament.

2. By his *assurance*. He influences *comfort* as well as *strength*: and this is called his *sealing* of us; by *justifying* grace, to ascertain our *pardon*, and *acceptance*.

From hence we may learn the *necessity* and *efficacy* of the *Sacraments*; and this in our Saviours own words, who instituted them.

1. The *Necessity*. *Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*; John 3. 5. And of the other Sacrament, *John 6. 53. Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

And yet the administration of each Sacrament in some cases is dispensed with; as in Infants dying without baptism, and in extremity of sickness or other just impediment, the sick person doth by faith eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour *Christ* profitably to his souls health, although he do not receive the Sacrament with his mouth.

But however ordinarily salvation is not to be had otherwise then by use of the *Sacraments*. In those extraordinary cases *faith* supplies the place of *Sacrament*. For though God has obliged us to the *means*, he hath not tied himself to them: and therefore as in the one Sacrament the Church hath decided it in behalf of the *Sick*; so in the other in the case of *Infants*, it is not reasonable to think, that *Christ* who hath commanded us to *suffer them to come to him*, will refuse them for that which was not their fault or neglect, for their not being baptized.

2. Their *Efficacy*. They prove effectual *non ponenti obicem*; if we do not put a bar of unbelief or impenitence in their way. *Mark 16. 15. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. And he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life*, John 6. 54.

Now why the *Sacraments* do not prove effectual alike to all, is not from the Sacraments, but from people themselves, when they, as the *Pharisees* did, *reject* or *frustrate the counsel of God*, which was for their good, to their own hurt.

III. To what they bear witness? and in what manner?

First, What it is they bear their record to.

1. The

1. *The divinity of Christ*; for these are divine institutions; and in such cases none hath power of appointing but God. Thus *Christ* has given order in the one Sacrament to *disciple* people, or to make them disciples, that is to enter them into Christian profession, by baptizing them; so the Greek imports, *μυητέσθαι βαπτίζοντας*. And in the other Sacrament he bids us, *Do this in remembrance of me*; that is, as the Church has paraphrased upon it, that we continue a perpetual memory of his precious death, until his coming again. And this is that, which the Spirit beareth witness to, according to *Christ's* own saying, *The Spirit shall testify of me.* Marth. 28. 19.  
1 Cor. 11. 26.  
John 15. 26.

2. *The œconomy of our salvation.* The expiation of sin by his blood, as ablution of filth by sprinkling of water; so eating and drinking denotes union with him, assimilation to him, and growth in him.

Secondly, *How*, in what manner. It is a record; and this shews that 'tis *authentick*, and ought to be *publick*.

They are *Authentick* instruments, and stand upon record: and such is our salvation, registred as it were and kept upon record, if we be not wanting to our selves. The *Sacramentarians* make nothing of them by taking them for bare signs. They are *signs* and *seals* too: nor is the doctrine of the *Word* sufficient without them.

Again, They ought to be *Publick* and *Solemn* in the administration. Children in *Baptism* are received into the Congregation. In the other we own our communion and fellowship with the Church.

The former hath been much abused, the latter as much neglected. Indeed when there was no face of a Church among us, it was the more excusable, and perhaps in some cases necessary. Now there is no such reason.

Further more particularly, the *Supper* ought to be frequent: *As oft as ye do it*, implies it should often be done. The primitive Christians went from house to house breaking bread. And it seems by that passage to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 16. to have been an established Order, that it should be administered every first day of the week, when also they made their Collections. Acts 2. 46.

IV. How these three Witnesses are said to agree in one. Though these three earthly witnesses are not one in the same sense as the three heavenly ones are, in the identity and unity of nature, yet they agree in one. They are not *Unum* indeed, but they are *in Unum*, to one purpose in the consent and agreement of their testimonies. They witness one thing, and to one purpose, and in one manner, to wit, in a Spiritual and Sacramental sense.

Instead of enlarging upon this head, I shall anon touch a little on it in my application.

V. There remains in the last place to answer an *Objection*, why the *Word* is not reckoned among the *Witnesses*; it being the instrument of spiritual life, and ground of faith: for *faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*. Let the *Sacraments* be the breasts of the Church, the *Word* is the milk and solid meat too. Then as the *Spirit* is twice set down for the third person, why not the *Word* twice for the second, the chief manager of our concerns? Why not *Spirit*, *Word*, and *Sacraments*, since the *Spirit* accompanies and influences the *Word* as well as them? Rom. 10. 17.

I will not derogate from the *Word* of God, however delivered; whether read or preached, though in weakness and foolishness, 'tis the power of salvation. Nor can I deny the Spirits assistance to it, begetting faith, setting it home to the conscience, &c. and the *Word* is honoured with the same appellation as the *Son of God*. But then the *Word* must give place to the *Sacraments* as the worthier and more effectual administration.

1. The *Word* supposes unbelief, is for the conversion of infidels, but the *Sacraments* were instituted for believers. The *Word* is to bring people to Church, *Baptism* to admit them, the *Supper* to confirm them. The *Word* is for instruction in a perswasive way; the *Sacraments* for assurance in a consolatory way. Now the *end* is nobler then the *means*: but the *Word* is only a *medium*: the *Sacraments* have *rationem finis*. For the *Word* is to draw us into Church-communion, and to fit us for a right use of the *Sacraments*. So though faith come by the *Word*, yet we are not assur'd but by the *Sacraments*.

Acts 2. 41.

2. The *Word* barely delivers the doctrine of religion, but the *Sacraments* are the seals of that doctrine. Here God sets his hand and seal, and we set ours. Here pass mutual stipulations and engagements between Christ and a pious soul. The *Spirit* witnesses to the word and in the word, but without the *Sacraments* seals not. Hence upon conversion it was that they were baptized. Thus upon *Peter's* Sermon there were three thousand added to the Church; when it was not their bare hearing, but their being baptized, made them Church-members. *Bonds* and *Bills* carry no evidence if the *Seals* be off.

Psal. 34. 8.

3. The word is indeed the *bread of life*; but it feeds and nourishes in a more remote way, coming in at the ear, and sinking down to the heart; but the *Sacrament* is a more proper and natural way of nourishment. This is *verbum visibile*, I and *gustabile* too. Here we may *tast and see* how gracious the Lord is. There we enjoy him only by hearfay; here by experience and personal knowledge. Add that this is more mysterious, and so more befitting Gospel œconomy, which is full of mysteries. Here is an immediate application of the benefits of Christ's death and passion. We are buried with him in Baptism, and we eat his flesh, and drink his blood, in the Supper. That alters our state, this confirms it.

Phil. 1. 16.

4. The word, as preached, has not the same or so near a relation to the *second person*, who is called the *Word*, the essential word, as the *Spirit* has to the *third*. For that is only the history and discourse of Christ, and may be told foolishly and impertinently, wickedly and with design, as some preach Christ out of Contention; but the *Spirit* here is the virtue and energy, the communication and partaking of the holy Ghost: and therefore 'twas not so fit the word should be repeated and set down twice, as the *spirit*.

5. I do acknowledge the *Spirit* doth accompany and virtuate the *Word* as well as *Sacraments*, but 'tis in another and lower way, as was before intimated. 'Tis not the same life and vigour, not the same efficacy in one as the other. He is in all our Church-offices: he breathes into us good desires, inclines our wills, inflames our affections at our prayers. His virtue and grace does *permeare Ecclesiam*, as Providence does the world: but then there are different administrations, though one and the same spirit. He mingles the word with faith, gives an hearing ear and an understanding heart. There he *convinces* only, here he *regenerates* in one, and *seals* our adoption, and intitles us to all priviledges; in the other



other applies in vital acts all the benefits, and seals us to the day of redemption.

I come now to apply to you my Brethren of the *Clergy*, and to my self. It were well, if we *Ministers*, as these sacred things, which our Office and Function obliges us to be conversant about, are in *Unum*, so we our selves would act in *Unum*, and agree in one in our Ministration of them.

It is not the *unity* of the Doctrine only, wherein I hope we do all perfectly agree; but it is the *uniformity* of Administration also, which must preserve the Church of God amongst us in her due reverence.

I must confess, we are born down with evil customs, both in one and the other *Sacrament*; but 'tis high time such evil customs should be checkt by Authority, and amended by our diligence in our several stations.

It is grown a fashion now, because people of fashion have used it, to have *Baptism* administred in their private houses, contrary to the very design of the Ordinance it self, which was appointed for the receiving of Infants into the Congregation, and incorporating them into Christ's Body, the Church.

Now what a solœcism is this, to pretend the doing of this any where else then in the Church before the Congregation? and we our selves in the very Office, when we pray that *whosoever is here dedicated to God by our Ministry, may be indued with heavenly graces, and everlastingly rewarded*; I say, in this expression we seem to imply, that this dedication of children to God cannot properly, at least not so fitly be done any other where; and that consequently those great advantages of *grace* and *eternal reward* cannot rationally, or with that assurance be expected elsewhere.

Such have been the late times, I acknowledge, when *Rebellion* was got into the Throne, and *Schism* into the Pulpit, that *private Baptism* was not only excusable, but necessary, when there was scarce the face of a Church among us, and it was dangerous, if not sinful, to own a Communion with those publick Assemblies.

But now there's no such reason, no such necessity; and why then may not things return into their wonted and due channel? for before these late times of *Usurpation* (so far as I can remember) there was little or nothing of this irregular practice.

In case of extremity the Church has, out of charity, provided a peculiar Office; yet with an obligation still, of coming afterwards to the Church, and there making a solemn profession.

I am sorry to hear what *objections* are made; that the people will have it so, and that the Minister's subsistence does somewhat depend upon it; Why! Brethren, are we to be *Men-pleasers*? are we to study filthy gain? if it be so, that we must warp from our engagements, and do unlawful things, because the people will have it so; if it be so, that the *English-Clergy* lie under that necessity, that we must, for the bettering of our subsistence, make irregular compliances; what shall I say, Brethren? *Salva, Domine; perimus.*

Another thing is, the infrequency of our *Communions*, to the great shame of Christianity. For, not to speak of those multitudes, who, out of *Sectarian* or *Atheistical* principles, withdraw from our Assemblies; how few in comparifon are there of those that frequent the Church, that ever

ever come to the *Holy Table*? And what shall we say of such, who seem to delight in the *Word*, and yet obstinately neglect the blessed *Sacrament*? They are at best but *half-Christians*; scarce that. Where is their witness of *pardon*, of *acceptance*; who want even the evidence of their *Church-membership*? How are they of the *Church*, who seldom or never communicate with her? How can they be said to belong to *Christ*, who have made themselves utter strangers to his Ordinances? And if the prudence of the Nation has by Law made the Sacrament a *Test* of peoples *Loyalty*; how much more is it of their *Christianity*? And yet many such there are, whom if we should go about to force to the holy *Table*, we should by so doing drive out of the *Church*: though it cannot be denied, but that in this case Authority hath power to *compel* people to come in, as appears by that parable, *Luke 14.23*.

However, let us of our *Order* not to be wanting to our duty, as we have bound our selves by promise at our *Ordination*, and by our *Oath* of Obedience; and as we stand obliged by our publick *Offices*, the very *Rubrick* whereof hath been confirm'd by Acts of *Parliament*.

Let us especially, who are placed near and about the great *Metropolis* of the Nation, mind the business of our Function; considering what great Advantages are afforded us, what sacred Courage is infused into us, by the Authority and Prudence of our *Right Honourable and Right Reverend Diocesan*; and withal remembring that all other Churches at distance will take their measures from our example, from what they shall see put in practice by us: so that if We of these places, who do, as it were, stand in the Van of the *English Church*, shall resolve unanimously, to keep our ground, like a stand of Pikes, the whole Nation will in some short time with ease be reduced into good order again.

May God grant us his grace so to teach his heavenly *doctrine*, so to administer his holy and blessed *Sacraments*, that he may have the *glory*, and his Church the *benefit*, and that we may with *comfort* give up our accounts at the great day. *Amen*.

Upon

*Upon the Discovery of the late Horrid  
Popish Plot.*

A Sermon Preached at S. Peters Westminster,  
Nov. 10. 1678.

Psalm XXXVI. 5. and part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Verse.

*Thy Mercy, O Lord, is in the Heavens, and thy  
Faithfulness reacheth unto the Clouds.*

*Thy Righteousness is like the great Mountains; thy  
Judgments are a great Deep. —*



THE Preacher tells us, that *That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been, and there is no new thing under the Sun, nothing but what hath been already of old time, which was before us.* But yet without contradiction to this Observe of the *Wiseman's*, we cannot but take notice that as the Inventions of *Art*, so the Designs of *Wickedness*, have had their strange and different Improvements in the several Ages of the World. Ecc. 3. 15. &  
1. 9, 10.

This Psalm was composed (as the *Syriack* Interpreter, in the Title and Inscription of it, informs us) at that time, when *David* was persecuted by *Saul*, several of his wicked dependents, such as *Doeg*, &c. envying his virtues and growing interests, and contributing to their Masters jealousies all they could for his destruction.

We have had and have still the same Instances of danger, the same Experiences of divine mercy, as *David* then had; yet *those* diversified with new direful methods of hellish Villany; *these* accompanied with heightning Circumstances of indearing Kindness. We have the same Occasion then, as *David* here had, to pour out our Complaints of the *Kings* and the *Churches* adversaries, and to make our Acknowledgments of God's wonderful and merciful protection and deliverance; and this by way of duty inforced upon us with strange surprizing Arguments of their malice on the one hand, and of his goodness on the other.



To begin with *David's* story. This was no more then he was to expect; look upon him either in his *personal* or *publick* capacity.

As to his *personal* qualifications, he was a man after God's own heart; one of great piety and devotion, and by consequence of as great acceptance with God, whom he so faithfully served, and by whom he had been from time to time so signally preserved. And upon this account he was to have Enemies enough, men of as corrupt Minds as Interests.

As to the *publick*, God's designation had been, and such was the peoples expectation from his merit, that he should be successor in the Kingdom. And this also was a sufficient argument to procure him enemies, who at this rate were to be God's enemies and the peoples too.

Upon both these bottoms stood those enmities, wherewith *David* was for a long time exercised; that he was God's and the peoples darling.

Thus are the *Good* and the *Great* expos'd to the envy and malice of wicked ones, who being possess'd with vicious principles, care not by what irregular practises they bring about impious and unrighteous designs, though it please a merciful and just God in the end to defeat all such projects and attempts.

The whole *Psalms* deserves a brief consideration, and we may divide it into four main parts.

1. A Character of *David's*, indeed of God's and the publick Enemies, as we before intimated, in the four first verses: which therefore the *Syriack* intitles *Objurgatio adversariorum*.

2. An Acknowledgment and Recognizance of divine Mercy, whereby all those adversaries machinations and wicked intendments against the Lord's Anointed, and his people, are frustrated and disappointed, and the *King* and the *Church* protected and preserved, in the five following verses.

3. A Prayer for the continuance of that his mercy to the *King* and *people*, and of that over-ruling restraint to his and their enemies, in the tenth and eleventh verses.

4. An *Epiphonema* or grateful Acclamation upon the whole, grounded upon an Assurance that God will continue that his righteous protection to the utter confusion of those enemies wicked devices, in the last verse.

I. The Character of his Enemies sets forth their bold wickedness and impiety: that 'tis notoriously manifest by their actions, that they have no fear of God before their eyes; and yet that they are as confident, as if they were in the right. And then further it describes their craft, their resolution, their industry, and their obstinacy in those impious purposes.

First, for their impiety: Verse 1. *The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes*; that is, that these wicked enemies and conspirators against the *King* and the *Church*, do in their plots and carriage go so apparently contrary to all Laws, both divine and human, to all principles of religion and common morality, that any considering person must resolve, and cannot but rationally conclude, that either they do not at all believe the being of a God, or that they do not fear that justice of his, without which he cannot be God; so that they are either arrant *Atheists* or sons of *Belial*.

Then

Then, notwithstanding this, their *Confidence*.

Verse 2. *For he flattereth himself in his own eyes; until his iniquity be found to be hateful, or until his abominable sin be found out:* as if he should have said; for all this they pretend to Religion and holy Church, and cover their villanies with a sanctimonious vail of pious intentions, till God at last convince them, or if not them, at least the world of their horrible wickedness by a timely discovery and a righteous punishment of their ungodly contrivances.

Next their *craft* and guilt.

Verse 3. *The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit:* that is, they boast their loyalty, and yet hatch anew the most desperate Treasons; they complain of persecution under perial Laws not executed, that is, under the greatest indulgence, and plot destruction to those who have favoured them more than they themselves could in reason have expected. They deny a former conspiracy, and yet resolve to justify it by acting it over again in a more execrable way. They put on false names to cover false practices; with the greatest solemnity they equivocate and dissemble, swear and forswear, say and unsay, stand out all tests and stand to none, and make no conscience of breaking faith and the most sacred obligations. They give out the Cause of Christ, whilst under that vizar they design to act parts quite contrary to his holy doctrine and blessed example. Their business is to cheat the world with a pretence of sanctity and zeal, in those actions, which must have proved of the most mischievous consequence.

Further, their *resolvedness* in their evil way.

*He hath left off to be wise, to behave himself wisely and to do good:* that is, they are resolved with themselves to go on, whatever come on't, and are so bigotted and inamour'd on their wicked cause, that they will not give themselves time to consider, or have the patience to examin and foresee the destructive consequences of it.

Again, Their *industrious* prosecution.

Verse 4: *He deviseth or imagineth mischief or vanity upon his bed:* that is, their thoughts are continually running upon it, and even in their privacies as well as their combinations, they are studying and plotting how they may compass mischief, though it prove vanity in the end (as the Margin has it) and only mischief to themselves.

Lastly, Their *obstinate* obduracy, or rather their principle.

*He setteth himself in a way that is not good; neither doth he abhor any thing that is evil,* as we read: that is, any thing, be it never so evil, will go down with them; they will venture upon any thing, though human nature and ordinary conscience has the greatest abhorrence from it, so it may be for their turn and serve their interest.

I have been the larger in the *Character*, by reason it will serve to magnifie Gods mercy to our *David* and us, in preserving him and us from such a sort of adversaries.

II. The *Acknowledgment* of God's Mercy, and that in general to all, in these two verses; and peculiarly to the truly pious in the three next. In the general.

*Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth to the clouds. Thy righteousness is like the great mountains, or standeth like the strong mountains; thy judgments are a great deep:* that is, notwithstanding all those impious devices and wicked conspiracies, thy infinite and never-failing goodness and fidelity secures us; thy ju-

stice will find out thine and our implacable enemies, and will stand unmoveable against all their attempts, and will bring them to their just reward and punishment by secret and wonderful means.

And this his mercy is a thing, a benefit, wherein all his creatures share.

O Lord, thou preservest man and beast; every thing living is maintained by thy all-wise providence.

Then his peculiar kindness to the pious, together with the improvements of it.

Verse 7. *How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God? therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings:* that is, the mercy of God is of that value and virtue, that all who love and fear him, may safely rely upon it for their defence and deliverance.

The improvements of this his kindness, both in this life and the next.

Verse 8. *They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness or plenteousness of thy house: and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures:* that is, they shall be largely recompenced with the rewards of their services, and the comforts of their performances. They shall have the greatest satisfactions and joys flow into their souls even in this life.

Verse 9. *For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light:* that is, thou art an unexhausted Ocean of all true felicity, and the vision and fruition of thee will be the complement of our eternal happiness in the world to come.

### III. A Prayer for continuance of his mercy and preservation.

Verse 10. *O continue thy loving kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart:* that is, let this thy goodness which I have been now acknowledging, always accompany me and all thy people.

Verse 11. *Let not the foot of pride come against me: nor the hand of the wicked remove me, or cast me down:* that is, let not the insolence or violence of the King's or Churches enemies ever prevail against our legal establishments.

### IV. The Assurance of this continued mercy.

Verse 12. *There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down and shall not be able to rise or stand:* that is, And now, thank'd be God, and praised be his goodness for the gracious and wonderful continuance of his undeserved mercies to our David and his Church amongst us, that their enemies have by his just providence brought themselves into so low and desperate a condition, that if we be wise, as he has been merciful, they shall never recover or be able to make any further dangerous attempts upon us.

The Acknowledgment we are now upon, and that takes in some of God's Attributes to be the Subjects of our praises: his Mercy and Fidelity, his Justice and Judgments; and these each of them set forth with their particular descriptions.

His Mercy in or above the heavens: which shews the height, the eminence and immensity of it.



His *Faithfulness* or Truth reaching unto the clouds: there's the mysteriousness and secrecie of it: or, as the *Syriack* renders it, *to the heaven of heavens*; which denotes, as the sublimity and infinity, so the evidence and clearness of it.

His *Righteousness* or Justice like the great or strong mountains, the mountains of God, which imports the validity, the stedfastness and unmoveableness of it.

His *Judgments* a great deep: to signifie that they are unsearchable, not to be fathom'd with our profoundest reasonings and considerations.

I. For the *Attributes* themselves.

*Mercy* and *Justice* in his nature; his *Mercy* accompanied with his *Faithfulness* according to the ingagement of promise; and his *Justice* attended by his *Judgments* in the execution of justice.

Again, *Mercy* and *Faithfulness* to his Anointed and People. *Righteousness* and *Judgments* to his and their enemies.

Further, *Mercy* and *Faithfulness*, that we may trust in him, and rely upon him. *Righteousness* and *Judgments*, that we may fear before him, and stand in awe of him; which will make up the *Applicatory* part.

The *Mercy* of God is the gratuitous emanation of that goodness, which is natural to him; which as it put him upon the production of his creatures at first, so it obliges him all along to their preservation.

Thus as he is a faithful creator, his mercy is over all his works, and all our fellow-creatures claim a share with us in the divine bounty: who openeth his munificent hand, and fills every thing living with his blessing; who neglects not the young Ravens, whom their unnatural damm leaves unprovided; and hears the young Lions when they roar to him for prey. And in this sense 'tis said at the bottom of the Text, that he preserves both man and beast.

Psal. 104. 28.

Psal. 47. 9.

Psal. 104. 21.

But then this mercy of his is more peculiar to the children of men, out of commiseration and pity. Our misery, which is particular to us in respect of our sins, hath rendred us particular objects of his mercy. *Misericordia*, to be merciful is to take anothers misery to heart, and to be tenderly affected with it. And thus even the worst of men participate with us of his mercy. Be ye merciful as your father in heaven is merciful. How's that? he does good to the evil, and is kind to the unthankful; not only in sun and rain, in temporal favours, but in spiritual blessings and vouchsafements, in affording them the means of grace. He will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he turn and be saved.

Luke 6. 36.

Ezek. 33. 11.

To come to the highest pitch and the nearest closure of this mercy of his, 'tis in a most especial manner obliged to his Church and People, whom he has promised never to forsake, and that all things shall work together for good to them; I say there's a personal indearment of this mercy to all pious souls, to secure them in dangers, and to deliver them out of distresses. To these he is indeed a Father of mercies and God of all consolation. Above all to his Vicegerents, such Kings as David was, the Defenders of his Faith, and the Governours of his Church and People, to stand by them, to cover their heads in the day of battle or conspiracy, to preserve their persons, and to shelter them under his wings. His providence watches over their safety, as being his Lieutenants: unless at any time for their own provocations, as he deals often with wicked

Rom. 8. 28.

2 Cor. 1. 3.

Princes,

Princes, or for the sins of the people, as sometimes he deals with pious ones, he take them away in his displeasure.

For, which is the second, his *mercy* is not so natural to him, but that his *justice* is as essential a property.

*Mercy* in his provisions for us and in his preservations over us; and *Justice* in his chastisements of sinners, and if nothing else will do, in their final destruction.

He is *just* and *righteous* in all his providential administrations, whereby he governs the world, and orders the events of all inferiour causes, that act subordinately under him.

Particularly in his disposing of human affairs, even in all our private conditions, in all the particularities of life, in every thing that befalls us we must acknowledge his justice, and say, *Iustus es Domine*; Righteous art thou, O Lord, and righteous are all thy judgments: and much more in publick concerns, in his upholding or overthrowing States and Kingdoms. Herein his *justice* most evidently appears; History is full of such instances.

And yet still most conspicuously it shews it self in the defeat of his and the Churches enemies. These must expect to feel the dreadful effects of his justice. *Nil carius illi principi Deo, &c.* says the Heathen Orator. Nothing is more dear to God, the Governour of the world, then well-govern'd States and Kingdoms. We may with more reason apply it to the Church, according to that promise of his, that *The gates of hell*, neither the power and force, nor the craft and policy of whatever her enemies, though backt and assisted by hell it self, *shall ever prevail against her*. This I say upon promise, and this is

3. His *Fidelity* or *Faithfulness*. He is a *faithful Creator* to all his Creatures, while they keep themselves under his protection, and do not forfeit the benefit of his mercy.

But to his people he is more particularly ingaged; they have peculiar and extraordinary obligations of his goodness to them, as being in covenant with him; *I will be their God*, says he, *and they shall be my people*. This the sum of all. I need not make a recital of others, which are all grounded upon this. Let us be *his people*, and he will be *our God*, and who can, who dare be against us, if God be for us, to preserve us, and to avenge us upon our enemies? That's the

4. His *Judgments*, the acts of his justice: and this *justice* of his to our enemies is the greatest *mercy* to us; nay to them too, by restraining their wickedness, and so lessening their sin and future wrath. And these his righteous *judgments* are in an eminent manner discovered in his discovering and bringing to light the secret contrivances, in preventing and defeating the malicious designs, and in baffling and confounding the wicked devices of all those who, upon whatever pretence, rise up against him, and his *Anointed*, and his Church and people; to make out that neither *He*, who is the great Governour of the world, nor his *Vicergerent*, who governs under him, beareth the Sword of Justice in vain, but will shew himself a revenger to execute wrath upon them who work such desperate and avowed evils.

We have done with the *Attributes* themselves, God's *Mercy* and *Justice*, and their concomitants, his *Faithfulness* and his *Judgments*; a word or two of their *description*, and then to the *Application*.

His

His *mercy is in or above the heavens*. With what *Jacob's staff* shall we take the height of it? Rather let us do it with *Jacob's ladder*, with our pious meditations, like those Angels he saw descending and ascending. His *mercy is so in heaven*, as the faithful witnesses are, the Sun and Moon, so as that we have the influence of them here on earth. *The earth* Ps. 33. 5. *is full of the goodness of God.*

Again, *In the heavens* too upon the account of their diurnal motion, or daily revolution; such are his compassions which are renewed to us Lam. 3. 23. every morning; and his tender mercies like the day-spring from on high Luke 1. 78. visit us.

Let devils in *hell* then, and turbulent spirits on *earth* plot and contrive what mischief they will, *He that sits in heaven will laugh them to scorn*, Psal. 2. 4. *the Lord will have them in derision*. As long as *heaven* is safe, and God cannot be outed of his throne and government, we are safe. The Devils are in chains, wicked men are under restraint, and can neither one or other go beyond their tedder. Heaven is above all, round the globe; it overlooks and incompasses all. Here's no breaking of prison, no way of escape or concealment, no avoiding the great Judges eye for discovery, or of his hand for punishment. And yet see here is a curtain drawn between heaven and us, the *clouds*.

His *faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds*. These are dark things, and forerunners commonly of tempest. Such were the enemies designs; they were lodg'd in the clouds. We were on the dark side of them, but the great Eye of heaven was above them, lookt into them, and lookt through them. God hath unfolded *the mystery of their iniquity* by another mystery of his love, and hath wrapt up his *fidelity in the clouds*, as his and our enemies had done their disloyalty, and hath darted forth such heavenly light upon their hellish design, as may serve for ever to amaze and confound them, and to direct and encourage us. The wonderful *faithfulness of God in the clouds*; that one of the *Nubigenæ* themselves, one of the *Centaurean* crew, should drop out of the clouds to be the *Mercury* and Messenger of that faithfulness. Strange *Paradox* of God's truth to us, that the Reporter of our danger could not have been true to us, unless he had first been false; nor could have provided for our safety without plotting first our destruction. Surely God cast some potent beam of his grace into his heart, which among those Ministers of Satan turn'd him into a real Angel of light.

Ah! if we would but do our parts, as God has done his, what a flourishing Church and People might we still be? May God give us his *grace* to make a right improvement of his *mercy*!

His *Righteousness as the mountains of God*: that is, the highest mountains: since the Rules of his Justice are *æternæ veritates*, the unmoveable standards of truth.

What more *just*, then *Necis artifices arte perire sua*, that the plotters of mischief should fall into their own snares? What more *righteous*, then that, whereas providence it self seem'd for our sins to be designing that theirs should be the triumphant religion in our divisions, they by their boistrous and impatient and wicked proceedings should be defeated of their expectations?

Thus the *wheel*, which was of it self by orderly motions coming upon us, they by their precipitation have deservedly brought upon themselves. And this is that *Ezekiel* calls a *wheel within a wheel*, and all full of eyes; where he tells us also, that these wheels turned not as they went; intimating that to apply violence to them, would be to disorder



order and spoil their motion. And still, though several Scenes of the wicked Intrigue and intended Mischief have been laid open, yet they are still dark and mysterious, full of intricate mazes and artificial involutions of villany: so that the very *mountains of God* have their tops and cliffs all covered over still with those *clouds*, that the divine *justice* which is compared to those *mountains*, though it hath discovered them, doth not yet fully discover it self.

Pfal. 121. 1.

May those *clouds* break, and fall down, not in storms and tempests of blood, as was design'd by the wicked plotters, but in showers of blessings; and may we ever look up to those *hills from whence our help cometh*.

Lastly, His *Judgments are a great deep*. Truth is said to ly at the bottom of the pit; and God by his *Judgments* fetches it out. He is in heaven, yet though his enemies go down to hell in their plots and minds, he is there also. Indeed not to speak of the depth of it alone; The *Conspiracy* in all its dimensions had nothing to equal it but the divine mercy in its disappointment. Such was the *height* of its insolence, deriving its commission from him who pretends to sit and act in God's place; such the *width* of its combined interest, as having taken in well near the whole faction both at home and abroad: such the *depth* of its horrid contrivance, conceived in the womb of damnation, impregnated with Satanical policy, brooded in the lowermost vaults of all the infernal region, and assisted with all the black forces of hell to boot, beside that wicked crew on earth, who were to be the Actors, for its production. As if they had meant at once to have sunk the foundation of it below the *depths* of divine *judgments*, to have riveted it into the very bottom of hell, and to have rais'd the superstructure of it above the *heights* of his *justice*, the *mountains of God*, and yet so to have ravel'd it and enveloped it with *clouds*, that it should have puzzled his *mercy* and *faithfulness* to have found it out. But, God be thanked, it is found out; and now 'tis time to find out our selves, and to *Apply*.

1. God's *mercy* and *faithfulness* to the King and his People; his *justice* and *judgments* upon his and their enemies.

Let us praise him for his *mercy*, and improve it. Let us answer his *fidelity* with a care of our selves. He will not always be at the expence of miracles for our preservation. Let us shew our care of our selves, and *faithfulness* to him who has so often delivered us, lest some worse thing, (if a worse may) befall us hereafter.

Then let us applaud his *righteous judgments* on our enemies. I would not be thought *canere triumphum*. We are not yet secure, nor should we ever be.

To shew us the way how we may ascertain our safety, how we may not forfeit God's *mercy*, nor turn his *justice* against our selves, the next *Use* will help us.

2. *Mercy* and *faithfulness* for us to rely upon him. *Righteousness* and *judgments* to fear him. We must so rely upon his *mercy* as to fear his *justice*: otherwise we may justly fear, we shall loose the benefit of his mercy. He will have the glory of all his Attributes. His *mercy* is to lead us to repentance, his *faithfulness* to oblige and indear our gratitude, his *justice* to excite our care that we fear to offend, and his *judgments* to affright us from our sins, his and our worst enemies. If we side still with his and our spiritual enemies, he will withdraw his *mercy* and in *justice* will deliver us over to our temporal ones.

How

How many and manifold have been his preservations! we may and must say, Not for our righteousness.

May we never provoke God by fresh provocations to throw off his care of us, to remove the Candlestick of his Gospel from us, and to give us up to the will of our adversaries.

May his *mercy* make us love and fear him; for *there is mercy also with him*, that he may be feared.

May those *clouds* of danger, which his *faithfulness* has dispell'd and blown aside, as they threatned storm, whilst they hung over us, so upon the breaking may they drop fatness, and make us fruitful in good works.

May the *mountains* of his *justice* ground our confidence in him, and our awe of him.

And, as this *Psalmist* tells us, *One deep calls upon another*, may the *depth* of his *judgments* call up the *depths* of our acknowledgments, that he may for ever continue his *mercies* to us, and pour out his *judgments* on all those that wish ill to his Anointed and to his Church among us.

May he ever defend the *Defender* of his *Faith*, and so settle both our *David's* house and his own Temple among us, which are both founded upon his holy Hill, that they may never be removed. *Amen.*

T t

Upon

## Upon the Fast-day.

A Sermon Preached at Chelsey, Apr. 11. 1679.

S. Matth. VIII. 25.

—Lord, save us; we perish.



**Y** Text is it self a Prayer (which is the Business we now come about) short and compendious, yet full and earnest: wherein we have

1. The *Petition* or *Address* set down; *Lord, save us.*

2. The *Danger* represented, as an *Argument* to inforce the Request; *We perish.*

The *danger* imminent, and therefore the *address* short.

The *Occasion* of this *danger* and *address* we are to look for in the *Context*.

Our *Saviour*, after he had entertained the people with his *Sermon* upon the *Mount*, and then being attended thence with whole multitudes, had spent the rest of the day in working several *miraculous* cures; at Even, to avoid the throng, he enters into a *Ship* with his Disciples alone, some *other little Ships* also accompanying him, and having been wearied with the days *fatigue*, he lays himself down in the Stern to repose on a *Pillow*; and, as they sailed along towards the other side of the *Lake*, falls asleep. In the mean time a great storm of *wind* with *rain* together arises; insomuch that the *Ship* was covered with water, and the company were in jeopardy: who out of sense of their present danger, which would not give them time to use many words, come and awake their sleeping *Master*, with the alarm and outcry of their sad distress, saying *Lord, save us; we perish*; or, as S. *Luke* has it, *Master, Master, we perish*; or, as St. *Mark* gives the account, *Master, carest thou not that we perish*? Alas! we are all ready to be drowned, and do'st thou sleep on and take no care to preserve us? He rises up straight, and first reproves their *fearfulness* and *want of faith*, that after so many instances and experiments of his power and care, they should distrust him and doubt of his presence for their security; and then rebukes the *winds* and the *waves*, saying to the Sea, *Peace, be still*; and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. Which almighty word of his, as it appeased the *tempest*, so it raised in his Disciples breasts another kind of holy *fear*, and pious wonder: for the men marvelled, says our *Matthew*: they feared exceedingly, says *Mark*; or, as S. *Luke* has joyned both those passions of affrightment and wonderment together, *being afraid they wondered*, at what they heard spoken by him, at what they saw done upon it; saying, *What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the Sea obey him!*

Thus



Thus much of the *Occasion*, wherein we have been the rather inclined to present you with the whole *Story*, which will fairly suit with our Case, and bear some proportion to the Circumstances of our feared *danger* and expected *deliverance*. Let me in a brief Essay run over the *Parable*.

The *English Church* has abounded with religious discourses and the means of saving knowledge; and, as we have had *Sermon upon Sermon*, so neither have we wanted *miracles* of an almighty goodness to confirm the truth of that Gospel-doctrine we profess, and to secure us hitherto in the possession of it.

Our blessed *Lord* (that I may speak it with some apprehension) seems to be wearied and tired out with what he has done amongst us and for us; and now, as if he intended to leave the Country and cross the water to some other plantation, he is got on Shipboard; and, as if he designed to leave us to our selves, to our own management and care, he goes into the *hinder part* of the Vessel, and lays him down to *sleep*:

But, God be thanked, that we have him still amongst us in the *Stern* at the steerage of our Ship, though fast *asleep*: whose very sleeps will afford us greater security, than all our own watchings and wakings can.

Yet however *safe* through his protection we may be, we ought not, through our own negligence, to be *secure*. It concerns us to have a sense of danger; for we are at best but in a *Ship*, not in a House upon Land; and in a *Ship* too, not in *Port*, not at *Anchor*, but in her course and under sayl: and whilst our great *Pilot* seems to sleep at helm, an unexpected *storm* may suddenly arise, and dash all our hopes, and baffle all our cares.

This has almost been our Case: a black *tempest* has overspread the face of our *Church*, and fill'd our ships hull with fear, and covered her with ruin.

And whence, from what quarter did this *wind* arise? whence should it come, but whence we have been often assaulted, even from our youth up, and as often by God's goodness graciously preserved? from the *Euroclydons* of *Rome*, our *Popish* adversaries.

And now what have we to do? what other course to take, but with the Disciples here to apply our selves to our blessed *Lord* and *Master*, and in loud cries to awake him, and to implore his care in our behalf, that he would rebuke those *winds* and *waves*, which our enemies the *Papists* have raised up against us? that he would *infatuate and defeat their counsels*, that he would *continue his mercies and the light of his Gospel to us, and to our posterities after us*? and in order to this, that he would *bestow his abundant blessings upon his Sacred Majesty and this present Parliament*?

This if we do with a faithful heart, relying upon his Goodness, and with ardent affections seek his Aid; he will arise, and his and our enemies, and all those clouds of danger, and storms of mischief, with which they have darkned the *Brittish skie*, shall all be scattered.

O let us then humbly and importunately address our selves to him, saying, *Lord, save us; we perish*.

I shall first give you an account of the words in a plain *Paraphrase*.

Then gather some *Observations*, applying them to our present occasion, upon which we are now met.

1. That *The Church of God is, as a ship, subject to many and great dangers.*
2. That *Distress is a fit and urgent reason of earnest Devotion.*
3. That *Our Extremity of Danger is likely God's opportunity of Deliverance.*

4. That Christ, as he is the Founder of our Religion, so he is the sole Author of our Safety and Preservation.

To begin first with the Paraphrase or Inlargement of the words; which I intend at this time to make my Prayer, accommodating it, as I may, to our present necessity and design: and I desire your attention to go along with me.

O holy Jesu, Son of God, our blessed Lord and Saviour, Head of thy Church and Founder of our holy Religion, look graciously upon Us of these Nations in our present danger; powerfully relieve us in this our distress. Awake up in thy righteousness, and save us from those Storms which threaten us, from the bloody and treacherous Attempts of our and thine Enemies, who under the cover of religious Zeal drive on the most horrid and hellish villanous Designs, and abuse thy holy name to the most wicked and unjustifiable Practices. Save us, O Lord, for thy Names sake, which we humbly adore; for thy Mercies sake, which we thankfully acknowledge; and for thy Gospels sake, which we unworthily profess.

We must confess, O Lord, such are our Divisions and Fractions amongst our selves; such our disagreements in Opinion and Worship; such our Dissents as to Judgment, and our Animosities as to Affection, that we the sinful distracted people of the English Church, had we no other Enemies but Our selves, have but too just reason to apprehend ruin and destruction, since a House, thou hast told us, divided against it self, cannot stand.

Again, we cannot but acknowledge, dear Lord, that such are our manifold Provocations, such the sinfulness of our Lives, that thou mightest justly take occasion thence to remove the Candlestick from amongst us, and to take thy Gospel away from us, and to give it to a people that may bring forth the fruits thereof.

But then, beside and beyond these sadning considerations, when we think of the combined Power and enraged Malice of our implacable Popish Adversaries, we are by all arguments of Gratitude obliged to own it as a Miracle of thy unspeakable Mercy, that we are yet a Church, that we are still a People.

O Lord, do thou heal our Divisions and repair our Breaches. Let the sense of common Danger at last unite us all as one man into one common interest. Joyn our hearts together in thy fear and in mutual love; that since we all pretend to be thy Disciples, to own thee for our Master, and to profess the Gospel of thy peace, we may confess thy name with one mouth and serve thee with one shoulder.

O gracious Redeemer, who camest to save sinners, such as we are, have mercy upon us. Pardon all the crying sins of this Land and Nation; forgive the Wantonness and Profaneness of these loose licentious times, and send forth the spirit of the fear of the Lord amongst us, which may check the insolence of that loose profane spirit which is gone out through the Land.

Blessed Saviour, evermore mightily defend thy Church and People here amongst us from all Papistical Plots and Conspiracies; and now at last by a total Defeat convince those Factors of mischief, (whose Faith is Faction, and their Religion Rebellion) of the vanity of all those their wicked Designs and ungodly Contrivances against Thee and Thine.

Master, Master, without thy help we perish. Our Vessel is leaky and unsteady in it self, and compassed with tempestuous winds and rolling seas; but, God and Thou be thanked, thou art in her stern, and thou dost  
not

not sleep. Thou that keepest our Israel, neither slumberest nor sleepest. Thou didst in thy due time awake of thy self without our calling; and didst graciously discover to Us our danger, when we our selves were all asleep, and not at all sensible. O continue this thy Care towards us; command the Wind and the Sea to be still, and so order our steerage, that our Religion and our Laws may be secured to us and to our posterities after us to many and many generations, till thy second Coming.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,  
Grant us thy peace.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,  
Have mercy upon us.

From our *Popish Antichristian* Enemies defend us, O Christ.

Graciously look upon us in our afflictions and distresses.

Pitifully behold the dangerous condition of thy Church.

Mercifully forgive the provoking sins of thy people.

Favourably with mercy hear those our prayers which are offered up to thee this day in all our English Congregations.

O Son of David, have mercy upon us, whom we own to be our only Lord.

O Lord let thy mercy be shewed upon us, the people of this Church and Nation.

As we do (and have reason from thy experimented goodness so to do in all instances of danger) put our trust in thee.

In a most especial manner Bless, we beseech thee, Him, whom thou hast made next under thy self chief Pilot in our Vessel, Supream Moderator and Governor of these Brittish Churches, our Sovereign Lord CHARLES, &c. Crown his Royal Head with thy Blessings, fill his Royal Heart with thy Graces, Protect his Person against all Treachery; establish his Government in Righteousness and Peace; direct his Counsels with thy heavenly Wisdom, and at the close of his Mortality, make his Glory great in thy Salvation.

Bless his Royal Consort Queen Katherine, James Duke of York, &c. enrich them all with thy heavenly Grace.

Be present and President amidst the great Council of the Nation, the Honourable Court of Parliament; and as thou didst here in the Ship with thy Disciples, do thou sit at stern; that by their sober Advices and pious Resolutions, thy Gospel may still flourish amongst us. And have the same care, we beseech thee, for those other little Ships, which attend this Sovereign Vessel of thine, and will probably run the same hazard with her, the Reformed Churches abroad.

Bless the whole Company of thy People, that are embarked in this Vessel of thine, and whose Happiness and Security depends upon her Welfare; all Orders and degrees of Persons amongst us, &c.

Nor pray we only unto thee, but also praise thee for all thy Protections and Preservations of this Church and Nation, since it hath been Reformed from the Errors and Superstitions of the Romish Church; for thy Defeat of the Spanish Invasion, 88. for thy Discovery and Disappointment of the Powder-Treason, &c.

Grant, we intreat thee, these our Requests, and accept of these our Acknowledgments, which we have already tendered unto thee in the publick Service, and do now again recommend to thee in thy own Name and Words, saying, as thou hast taught us to pray, Our Father, &c.

LORD



## LORD, SAVE US; WE PERISH.

From these words we drew four *Observations*: the first of which was, that

I. *The Church is like a Ship*, as in several other respects, so particularly upon this account, that 'tis continually exposed to many and great dangers.

Our *Saviour* went with his *disciples* into a *ship*; and sure where *They* were gathered together, and *He* in the midst, at the head of them, there must needs be a *Church*, a right Christian Congregation. Whilest he slept, the storm arose, which tost the *Vessel* with winds, and covered it with shows and surges, at once indangering both *Ship* and *Church*, which now were to run the same risk of jeopardy.

*Noah's Ark* was a Type of *Christ's Church*, in that as he and his family were saved in the *Ark* from perishing by water, so we by being admitted into the *Church*, are by baptismal water saved from perishing. So the *Church* tells us in her Office of *Baptism*; where she drives on the *Alle-gory* throughout, praying that God would sanctifie the child with the *bo-ly Ghost*, that he being delivered from wrath, may be received into the *Ark of Christ's Church*, and being stedfast in faith, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally he may come to the land of everlasting life.

Hence it was, I suppose, that from this similitude that famed Sentence had its original, *Extra Ecclesiam nulla est salus*; Out of the *Church* no hope of salvation, as all those who were kept out of the *Ark* perished in the Deluge.

And yet it must be acknowledged, that as there were all sorts of Beasts and Fowls, *unclean* as well as *clean*, admitted into the *Ark*, so all sorts of persons, good and bad, are taken into the Communion of the visible *Church*, Hypocrites and carnal Professors alike as true Believers: insomuch that the far greater number of those in the *Church*, no less then those out of the *Church*, finally perish, notwithstanding their Church-fellowship, and the advantage of an outward Profession.

Nor is the *Ark* alone so appropriate a resemblance of the *Church*, as that any ordinary *Ship* may not, in some kind or other, represent it; whether it be for *passage*, for *merchandise*, or for *war*.

Look we on the *make* and *build* of it; 'tis fitly compacted and framed together, both for strength and beauty; so the Apostle compares it to a Timber-structure, of which a *Ship* is the most exact model and instance.

If we consider it in its *furniture* and *tackle*; it has its *compass* to sayl by, the word of God; its *Sayls* of devout affections, to be filled with the breathings of his Spirit; and its *Anchor* of Hope to stay its self upon, the merits of his Son.

If we regard the *design* of a ship to go from port to port; ours is bound Heaven-ward; for we seek a country, even the land of everlasting life, as ye heard before. The *Church* entertains *passengers* to waft them into the regions of bliss; it has her *cargo* of divine truths; and as a *Man of war* too, she is all along throughout her whole voyage *Militant*.

As to her *manage* and *conduct*; she has *Christ* for her *Pilot*, and under him the chief Magistrate to steer the *Vessel*, and to govern the ships crew.

But in no one thing is the *Church* more like to a *Ship*, then in those frequent dangers and jeopardies she is to undergo.

Dan-

Dangers from without; all the Elements as it were conspiring her ruin; rocks and shelves to split her; flats and quicksands to found her; tempests and storms of persecution to overwhelm her; Corsairs and Pirates, all her Ghostly foes, to attack her.

Dangers from within; by leaks of Schism and Division, and many other casualties through negligence or ill government.

Amidst all these disastrous circumstances, what need have we to pray to the Lord God, who spreadeth out the heavens, and ruleth the raging of the Sea, and hath compassed the waters with bounds, that he would (as we pray for the Fleet) preserve his Church from the dangers of the wicked World, and from the violence of the Enemy; that we may in peace and quietness serve him all our days without fear?

That the Church of God has through all Ages been thus liable to infinite hazards and misfortunes, and yet constantly amidst all its pressures, hath by his miraculous mercy been upheld and preserved from perishing; Ecclesiastical History would furnish us with abundant Instances: which I shall not now insist upon, but fixing your thoughts at home, rather call to your remembrance the imminent Dangers this our Publick Church hath been exposed too, and Gods gracious Deliverances, we have so often had experience of.

Not to mention our provoking sins and our intestine broils, which might long ere this, (had not God been infinitely merciful beyond our deservings) have procured our ruin; such has been the inveterate and implacable Malice, such the cruel and subtil Contrivances of our Popish Adversaries; that the waters of the proud had gone over our souls, and our Church, the vessel we say in, either been sunk into the deep, or blown up into the Air, had not God by his watchful care discovered and defeated their wicked machinations.

And all this villanous Despight of theirs we owe (next to our own sins) partly to the blindness of their zeal, partly to the interest of their ambition; since we first, which they gave us too just occasion to do, departed from their Communion, by retrenching the corruption of their doctrine, and reforming the superstitions of their worship.

What should I speak of the Spanish Invasion in 88, when by open hostile force they designed to have captivated the whole Nation? of the Gunpowder-Treason, when with Calagula they meant at one blow to have cut off the King and his Nobles and the Peoples representatives then met in Parliament? of their continual Plots and Conspiracies against the lives and governments of our Protestant Princes? These are all recorded in authentick Story, and cannot be denied by our very Adversaries without as great an impudence as designed them.

But of all those former practices there is no one can parallel that execrable hellish Plot, which was now set on foot against us, and is still going on, and, if God have not mercy upon us, doubts not of success, to sink the Protestant Religion, which we profess, so far as never to rise again. And surely should they obtain their ends upon us, the rest of the Reformed Churches abroad must run the same fate, this being in all likelihood a Combination of the whole Romish Party to have turned out all Protestant, that is all Evangelical, Truth out of the world.

And what are we to do, when our Ship is thus encompassed with dangers, but to look about us, and to look up to heaven, from whence our help cometh; to hold all hands up in labour and in prayer, both as to industry and as to devotion; for that's the next thing we are to speak to;

that

II. Distress

II. *Distress is a very fit season for Devotion.* Now that the *Ship* was covered with water, and they saw themselves in a *perishing* condition, it was high time for them to cry, *Lord, save us.*

The sense of present danger awakens the worst of men to the practice of this duty of *prayer*, and our earnest prayer awakens God to our relief. The *Psalmist* tells us, that at *Gods word* or command, *the stormy wind arises, which lifteth up the waves.* And probably for this very reason God sometimes *causes*, or at least most times *permits*, storms and troubles to arise upon his Church, that his people, who when they are safe and see all things quiet about them, are too apt to forget God, and refuse to hearken to the still voice of his word, and to obey his commandments, may from such terrible dismal instances of danger learn to fear him, to adore his Majesty, to acknowledge his power, to implore his goodness, and in their great distress to cry unto him for help; *Save Lord, or else we perish.*

Thus even those, whom natural Inclination will not oblige, Necessity and the appearance of *danger* will force to their devotions. Hence that known saying, *Qui nescit orare, discat navigare*; He that knows not how to pray, let him go a shipboard, let him learn to sail: So it was in *Jonah's* case, that when the Vessel was in danger, they all fell upon their knees and cried to their Gods; and he himself, who was the only person concerned in the storm, was least concerned, as being fast asleep: who nevertheless, if he neglected that duty in the Ship, performed it afterwards in the Whales belly.

*Necessity* is such a quick spur, such a natural argument for our addressing our selves to God, that 'tis usual even for Vulgar people, upon the apprehension of any slight unexpected hurt, upon any dangerous or frightful surprize, to call upon God, to cry out, *O God! O Lord!* a custom and form of words, which I do not by any means, upon every trivial occasion, approve; but however this very thing is sufficient to evince the sense of nature, which upon the meanest imagination of harm or danger, is so apt to put people upon something like prayer, the naming of God.

And this calling upon God, if it be in faith and with a reverent regard and earnest application, is a thing of *interest* as much as *duty*; that which as God expects and requires, so he accepts and takes kindly at our hands. *Thou shalt call upon me in the day of trouble*, is his Command; and *I will deliver thee*, is his Promise. As our times and seasons are in his hand, so the time of distress is the fittest season to seek him, the best opportunity for us to find him.

With what confidence of his mercy then may we call to him out of the depth of our misery, and out of the jaws of death, which at any time is ready to swallow us up? to cry, *Save Lord*, and with repeated earnestness to represent our danger, *Master, Master, we perish*; and even to expostulate with him, *Master, carest thou not that we perish?*

This is the highest Incouragement to Piety and Devotion, that as he is a *God hearing prayers*; so in our distress, if we with earnest importunity apply our selves to him, he will most certainly hear us, and help us, and deliver us out of our distress. That is the *third* thing we are to consider.

III. *Our Extremity is God's Opportunity.* When the *Ship* was ready to *perish*, then was a fit time for *Christ* to awake and command a calm.

I have read an elegant dismal description of a *Shipwreck* in a *Greek Romance*; when all the Passengers and Seamen too, with hands and eyes and hearts lifted up to heaven, fetcht the last shriek, expecting with their tattered Vessel immediately to go down quick to the bottom of the Sea.

And



And when men are in such a posture of *danger*, how is God's mercy signa-  
lized at such a time in their *preservation*?

We find that in the 107th *Psalms*, besides other Instances of God's particular Providence to *travellers*, to *prisoners*, to the *sick*, and in other varieties of life, this dreadful and gracious *Scene of Mariners danger* and God's *deliverance* piously laid open: *They that go down to the sea in ships, that follow their affairs in the great waters; these men see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul melteth away because of the trouble; they reel too and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distress. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they are at rest, and so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.*

This, I say, is business in ordinary providence; but when the *Ship*, which himself with his Almighty care and skill has undertaken to steer and bring to her desired Port, when the safety and interest of his *Church* and People, is reduced to extremity, how much more reason have we to expect the extraordinary effects of his *power* and *goodness*, who both *can* and *will* provide for his, when they are destitute of all other help?

When a *Church* or *Nation* is, to the eye of man, in all human probability, given up for lost; when all other helps and means fail, then is God's time to come in *and unyavis*, at a dead lift, who is *a ready help in the needful time of trouble*. There is nothing so *secret* which he cannot bring to light, nothing so *strong* which can resist his power, nothing so *cunningly* contrived which he cannot disappoint.

He can by his *Omniscience* make timely discoveries of our enemies designs, that we may by our own prudence and vigilance prevent our danger; or if that will not be, he can by his *Omnipotence* break all their forces and attempts to pieces, and can with his infinite *wisdom* unravel and defeat all their subtilties, and take them in their own craft.

And as he *can* do this, so he *will* do for those who love and fear him; he being not only engaged by *promise*, that if we call upon him in our trouble, he will deliver us; but also obliged in *honour* to look after those great and dear concerns which he has in the world, his *People*, his *Gospel*, his *Church*, his *Truth*, the purchases and bequests of his welbeloved and only begotten *Son*.

This is that which makes highly for the *glory* of God, to rescue his faithful ones from the brink of ruin: this is that which makes his *salvation* wonderful to his people, and his *justice* dreadful to their enemies: this is that which endears his *mercies* to us, and calls for a *subtle gratitude* from us.

And great reason have we to ground a holy *confidence* upon, that it may be so now with us in this our day, if we do not by our negligence forfeit the advantage of his admonition, and sleep on in our security, notwithstanding that he has awakened us with an *Alarm* of our danger: I say, this is the ground of our confidence, that our blessed Lord is *in eadem Navis*, in the same Ship with us, and embarked in the same cause; so that who are Enemies to Us upon the account of our *Religion*, are at once enemies to Christ himself also, and by consequence members of *Antichrist*. And that is our *last* proposition.

IV. *Christ, as he is the Founder of our Religion, so he is the sole Author*  
V v of

of our Deliverances. In saying, *Lord, save us*, they own him for their Lord, and they own his power to save them.

That he is the founder of our Religion, however our Enemies may charge it with novelty, and call it *heresie*, we need no other Probation, then to appeal to that doctrine, which has been delivered by himself and his Apostles in the Book of God; which therefore they keep locked up in an unknown tongue, that their fraudulent dealings may not be detected and laid open to the people.

For with what forehead can they boast themselves to be the best and only Christians, who, when we consider how in their principles and practices, in faith and manners, they have deviated from the truths and duties of Religion, can have little or no pretence to Christianity at all; unless *Idolatry, Superstition, Perfidiousness, Treason*, and the like Villanies, must pass for the marks and characters of Christianity?

We have not so learned Christ, nor are we taught by him to disobey just Powers set over us, to embroyl Kingdoms, to depose and assassinate the Lords anointed, and to massacre innocent people, which are their wicked tenets; besides many other advantages our profession has over theirs in point of doctrine and worship, wherein we keep close to the Primitive Church, from which the Romish Synagogue hath in many particulars evidently apostatized.

To Thee then, O holy Jesus, who wast the Founder of our faith and holy profession, we fly in all our distresses, as to our only Deliverer. In thy merits and satisfaction, in thy mediation and intercessions alone we fix the anchor of our hope. In thy saving health we repose all our trust, and ground our assurance.

To Thee alone it is that we address our requests. Thy Patronage alone is sufficient for our direction in life, for our protection in danger. Thou art the way and the truth and the life. The way in thy holy example, the truth in thy heavenly doctrine, and the life in the application of thy merit. We acknowledge neither Saint nor Angel, much less do we repair to Images and dumb Idols for our relief in the instances of our distress.

'Tis thy ingaged care and experimented love we rely upon for our preservation. Save and deliver us, we humbly beseech thee, as thou hast done hitherto, (praised be thy goodness) from the hands of thine and our enemies; abate the pride, assuage the malice, and confound the devices of all those that have evil will to our Sion; and discover more and more, and ever defeat their wicked plots and conspiracies against Thee, thy Church, and thy Vicegerent. And now that this Ship of thine, wherein Thou and thy Vicegerent under Thee, sit at helm, is anew assaulted, and endangered, O do Thou evermore mightily defend the Defender of thy Faith, and suffer us not to sink under the weight of our sins, or the violence of the Enemy. Amen.

TWENTY ONE

# SERMONS

UPON

COMMON SUBJECTS

OF

Christian Doctrine.

THE

TABLE and TITLES where-  
of are set down after the Dedication.

---

By ADAM LITTLETON D.D. NB—  
*Archididascalus Scholæ Westmonasteriensis, &  
Auctor Dictionarii eruditissimi Sub-Decanus Westm<sup>st</sup> obiit—  
Julii mense— Cl: Aet<sup>at</sup> hanc 1674<sup>to</sup> Capellanus Regi  
Carolo 2<sup>do</sup> NB— Sepultus in Ecclesiâ Chelſeiana, ubi olim fuit  
Rector—* L O N D O N, *dingworth's Dict<sup>y</sup>*

Printed by S. Roycroft for Richard Marriott.

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*Of Gods Love in giving his Son.*

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* before the  
KING, *Jan. 30.* being the fourth Sunday  
after *Epiphany*, 16<sup>59</sup>/<sub>70</sub>.

S<sup>t</sup> John III. xvi.

*God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*



PON this black dismal Day, which lies under the guilt of such a barbarous and execrable *Murder*, as the Sun never saw any the like, but that, when the Eternal Son of God suffer'd, it might be expected I should have made choice of some sadder Subject to treat of then *Love and Life*. But seeing publick Order has excus'd *Sunday* from wearing the Blacks and putting on the Sackcloth due to that direful Remembrance, and that agreeably to the sense of the Ancient Church, which alway lookt upon the *Lord's day* as a day of chearfulness, inso-much that in some old Councils Fasting on *Sunday* has been adjudged no better then *Heresy*: I shall leave that whole *Akeldama*, that bloody field of discourse open and free to that *Reverend Person*, who is to morrow to perform the duty of this place; and applying my self to the more general solemnity of the time, the *Epiphany*, from which this *Sunday*, with some others, takes its name; to wit, the Manifestation and Appearance of our Blessed Lord God in the Flesh; I shall endeavour to fix your most serious thoughts for a while upon God's great *Design* out of love sending his Son, and the great *Interest* of the World in receiving him by Faith, as 'tis here in these words represented to us.

And methinks, when I consider the several Gradations, as they are here set, the Whole appears like *Jacob's dream*, a Ladder erected, whose top reaches to the highest Heaven, and the foot of it fastened on the low-Gen. 28. 12ermost Earth. Only instead of Angels ascending and descending, here is God himself from Heaven descending on one side, and the whole World, whosoever will, ascending on the other side; and he that was the appointed *Mediatour* betwixt both, that was himself both God and Man, the only begotten Son of the Father, as it were in the middle between both, both descending and ascending; as himself gives the account, Verse 13<sup>th</sup>. No man, saith he, hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven.

## Of Gods Love in giving his Son.

God condescending to us in *Love*; We ascending up to him by *Faith*.  
*Love* the great Design of God; *Faith* the great Interest of the World.

That *Love* exprest in God's giving and sending his Son; that *Faith* made out in our receiving and obeying him that was sent.

All the rounds of the Ladder from Heaven downwards made of *Love*; all from Earth upwards made of *Faith*.

God at the top of the Text, and *Life* at the bottom; and that a life in God, a life with God; 'tis *everlasting life*.

God all along deriving this *life* to the world by *Love*; and the World, every soul that believeth on him, applying it to itself by *Faith*.

And then lastly the *Medium* of that *Love* on the one hand, by which God's love was conveyed down and made out to the World; and the *Object* of that *faith* on the other hand, upon which our faith is to be grounded and built up, is Christ *the only begotten Son* of God; who came down from the Father into the World, by the way of *love* to assume our Nature, and to dye for our sins; that we by the way of *faith* owning him to be the Eternal Son of God, and relying upon the merits of his Satisfaction, may be rais'd up with himself at the last day to life and glory; that where he is, there we may be also, even in Heaven, in the glory of the Father, to wit, as many as believe on him. *For God so loved the World, &c.*

John 14. 3.

Having thus lookt over the whole, and in a brief *Survey* seen the frame and compacture of this mysterious Ladder from top to bottom, and from side to side; it would perhaps be a delightful, and no less useful contemplation, leasurely to go step by step up and down the Scale of *love* and the Scale of *faith*: and then at last consider the combination of God's *love* and our *faith* in *Christ*, by the union of the two Natures in one and the same Person; the *Hypostatical Union* being the true-love knot, by which God tied himself and the world together, and God's giving his Son in the Assumption of our Nature, being the Center of the Text, in which all the lines of *love* on one hand, and those of *faith* on the other, do kindly meet, and are perfectly terminated. All the mercies and blessings of the Father being purchas'd for us, and convey'd and handed to us by *Christ* made Man; and all those future advantages and glorious expectations of Salvation and Life being ascertained and made out to us into us by our *faith* in him and his merits.

But having design'd in all plainness of *devotion*, waving the *doctrinal* concern, That God sent his Son into the world, as a thing readily acknowledged by all that own themselves Christians, a thing that needs no proof I am sure in this Congregation, having, I say, design'd to sum up all that little I have to say in three or four hearty warm *Meditations*, I shall, make them the more orderly, cast them into a more strict and *Logical* Method: as we find here.

1. The great Work it self of our Redemption exprest, in God's giving his only begotten Son.

2. The Motive or Impulsive Cause, that put God upon this Design; his Love: *God so lov'd the world.*

3. The ultimate End and Purpose of this donation, why God thus gave his Son; and that is life and salvation through faith in Christ, *that whosoever believes on him should have everlasting life.*

*First,*



First then, let us meditate upon the great *Work* it self, as it was transacted betwixt God the Father and God the Son. L

1. Consider the *Manner* of the action; 'twas by way of gift : *God gave his Son*. How given ? freely, without any desert of ours, upon no other consideration but his love, upon no other condition but our acceptance.

Given *to us*, into our nature. Given *for us*, in our behalf, as the price of our ransom ; *for us* too, in our stead ; to do that for us, we could not do for our selves, and to suffer that which we should have suffer'd.

Given *up*, as our surety, to death and to the sentence of the Law, as having taken upon him our ingagement.

And lastly, Given as the promised *Messias*, and set over us as a *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King* ; as 'tis said, *he gave some Apostles, some Evangelists, &c.* As a *Prophet*, to reveal to us the whole will of God concerning our Salvation. As a *Priest*, to expiate our sins by the one oblation of himself, and to bless us in turning every one of us from our iniquity. And as a *King*, to govern us by his Word and Spirit. Eph. 4. 11. Acts 3. 25.

2. Consider the *Person* giving, *God, viz. the Father* ; by his eternal purpose in the wonderful contrivance of it, and by strange providences in the managery and accomplishment of it.

3. Consider the *Person* given, *God the Son* ; for 'tis *the only begotten Son* : which denotes the dignity of the Person at once, and the excellence of the Gift. There was nothing in nature could have been so full and fair an Instance and Argument of Divine Love ; nothing so sure a Ground and Buttress of our *Faith*, in order to the salvation of men, as the Incarnation of the Son of God was.

O then, *my Soul*, consider, and let this stupendous transaction take up thy amused thoughts a while.

Let the Meditation of God's severe *Justice*, which could not be otherwise satisfied but by giving up his only begotten Son, loosen the joints of thy knees, and throw thee into an humble prostration, and work in thee a sorrowful acknowledgment and a hearty detestation of thy sins, which reduced the glorious God to those straits and exigences, and put him upon the necessity of sending his only Son to make satisfaction for thee in the flesh.

Let the meditation of his *Mercy* in the Incarnation of his Son, cause thee to lift up thy hands and thy heart to Heaven with thankful admirations, and to bless thy self, and to bless thy God for all those blessings which are convey'd to thee from thy blessed Saviour, who was himself made a curse for thee, and put on thy flesh, content to be given up to the carnage and execution of the Law for the purchase of thy pardon.

*Oh Soul of mine*, resolve with thy self, thou art no longer mine, no longer thine own, but thy dear Saviours, who has not only purchas'd thy pardon, but thee too, and has bought thee with a price, and gave himself for thee ! Do thou then in gratitude give up thy self to him ; let him be thine, and do thou be his ; who for thy sake came down from Heaven in the sorry disguise of thy Mortality, that he might court thee to happiness, and bring thee to life.

Learn from what he has done and suffer'd in thy behalf to put a value and esteem upon thy self, who hast cost the Eternal Son of God so dear ; and sell not thy self for nought to work wickedness, and at woful unconscionable rates to purchase to thy self that misery, from which he came to redeem thee.

*Oh !* remember what bitter and ignominious things he has indur'd for thy

thy sake during his earthly converse, when he put upon him thy *nature*, that he might impart to thee his *grace*; and fling away from thee those lusts and abominable things of thine, which brought thy Saviour down to the dark Chambers of Death, and the black Regions of Hell; and will one day, e're long, if thou continuest in them unrepented, bring thee thither; where thou must for ever abide, not as a sharer in his Triumphs, but as a Trophie of his Justice, for having slighted his mercy and abus'd his goodness, in neglecting so great salvation.

O consider with trembling and amazement, how deeply the counsels of thy God as to thee-wards were laid; upon what reason this great transaction of sending the Son of God into the world in the behalf of sinful thee, was grounded.

What was there in all this reeking sediment of the lower world, that could attract and fetch down to its embraces those purer empyreal flames of divine love? What was there here, that the blessed God should pass by all those orient and unparallel'd beauties of the upper world, myriads of Angels, the *Cherubs* and *Seraphs*, names that are full of the charms and flames of celestial love, and should pitch his affections on men, espouse our interest, and joyn our nature with an inseparable tye of Marriage to himself?

What was it, that thou (*poor Soul*) shouldst be thus vouchsaf'd the courtships and caresses of the great *Jehova's* love? What was it should make the Son of God for thy sake appear in the form of a Servant, put on thy Livery, and wear it out to rags in thy Service?

Was there any thing in thee, *poor Soul*, that might invite and call down the glories of Heaven thus to drudge for thee here upon Earth? Was it any desert of thine, that a glorious God should deal thus graciously with thee?

No, no; thou hadst nothing but sin and misery, which could intitle thee to divine mercy. It was his mercy for his mercies sake; it was his meer *love* and unprovoked kindness, which mov'd him to all this: and that's the *next* Stage of our Meditations.

II. The only *Motive* was his *love*; he was put upon't by the inclinations of his own Nature, and the instincts of a gratuitous goodness in himself from within, where the Spring of all his actions of mercy lies. Reasons of his *severity* he takes away from without him, but the reasons of his *kindness* are all internal, and flowing naturally from the principle of his own will; *He will have mercy, because he will have mercy.*

Rom. 9. 15.

O meditate on this *Love* of his, and let your meditation be sweet. Consider it with all its advantages.

1. Consider it in its *Nature*; 'tis *aydum*, pure and perfect *Charity*; a love of good will; not for any advantage of his own. 'Twas his good pleasure to save us, who had no merit but our misery; no requital to make him, but the pleasure and satisfaction of his seeing us happy; no other reason to expect such gracious obligations at his hands, but that we were by our depraved nature in a state of enmity with him.

Ecc. 1. 14.

2. Consider it in the vast *Disproportions* betwixt the person loving and the thing loved; God and the *World*; the Immortal God and *Vanity*; the Everlasting Spirit, and *vexation of Spirit*; (so the Wiseman sums up the total of the world to be.) God and Mankind; the Holy and Glorious God, and sinful Men, vile dust and ashes. What but an Almighty boundless Love could reconcile these distances?

3. Con-

3. Consider it in the *Universality* of its extent to the whole world. It became not his Infinite Love to be confin'd, or parcell'd out. The benefit of Christ's coming in the flesh was intended for all men, and for every man; and accordingly the Evangelical terms are propos'd and offer'd to all: *Go*, says Christ in his Commission to his Apostles; *into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, <sup>Mark 16. 13.</sup> men & beasts, to the whole creation*: To what purpose, if all the world, if every creature may not be the better for't?

4. Consider it lastly in its *Degree*; it was at the height: he not only lov'd us, but *he so lov'd us* too, with that vast kindness and strange passion, that he thought nothing too good for us, and with such an indearing method of expressing the love he had for us, that for our sakes he parted with his *only begotten Son*: in this act he did his utmost; for though he can do all things, yet he could not have lov'd us better; and indeed nothing else could have serv'd the turn. God in his *mercy* could not have bestow'd upon us any thing greater; nor could he in his *justice* have accepted any thing from us less.

And now, *ye sons and daughters of men*, meditate upon the excellence of God's *love*, and the freeness of his *grace* to us in Christ.

Let our thoughts be swallow'd up in the contemplation of this Abyss of *love*, and let us lose our selves in this maze of kindness.

*O blessed God! O dear Saviour!* when I look up to the infinite dazzling perfections of Divine Nature, and then look down again, and consider the vileness and frailty of our own; what Incentive could there be to make thee take up a Body like ours? When I think what *God* is, and see what the *World* is, and what a mean opinion even Wise and Good men have of it; how was it possible God should fall in love with it?

*O more than Seraphick Love! O Charity* most truly *Divine* and right God-like!

How should this consideration melt down our hearts with the *coals* of Divine *love* into a kindly compliance with this good will of his for our good? And how should the sense of his most affectionate obligingness win us to a suitable conformity with all his desires, whose great design it is, by all he requires of us, to make us eternally happy?

How can we grutch doing our utmost for him, who exerted his Omnipotence to serve us, did all that ever his Almightyness could do to bring about the great business of our salvation, and has so abundantly exemplified that duty we owe him in his own carriage towards us, having loved us with all his heart, and with all his strength?

*O wonderful and amazing love!* Who can but with a sacred horror resent it, that a good God should, in kindness to the sons of men, shew himself so unkind, and (may I speak it with reverence) almost unnaturally severe to his own *only begotten Son*? for he gave him up with a steady design to have him crucified, as appears plainly by comparing this sixteenth *Verse* with the fourteenth.

*O most incomprehensible! O no less comprehensive Love!* whose influence reaches and extends it self to all parts, to all persons of the world: for it was his love to the *world*, as well as a world of love. Nor was it fit that the Eternal Son of God should be parted with at any lower rate, should be given for a less Purchase than a *world*.

Nay, had there been a world of worlds, were there as many Worlds as there are Stars, and every of those Balls of light a habitable World, as some are fond enough to imagine; God's thus giving up his Son had been a sufficient Ransom for them all.

Come



Come then, *poor sinners*, with confidence, lay aside all desponding thoughts, and put in your claim to your interest in this *acumenical* love of God. Let not your fears, let not the conscience of your own ill deservings, let not the apprehension of your condition, be it what it will, keep you back, and exclude you, where God has so freely admitted you. There's *love* enough in God, there's *merit* enough in Christ for us all. God shuts out none from the participation of his *love* in Christ, but those who wilfully, through unbelief, shut out themselves. Say with S. Paul, *1 Tim. I. 15.* whoever thou art, whatever thy sins be, that *Christ came to save sinners, whereof I am chief.* It was for thy sake, for my sake, that *Christ* came into the world; and the greater sinners *thou* and *I*, or any of *us* are, the more we need a Saviour, and the more we must blame our selves if we miscarry.

Repent we then of our sins, and assuring our selves that they cannot be greater then the *mercies* of God, or the *merits* of Christ; let us have faith in him: For *God lov'd the world, and he gave his Son*, to this very purpose, *that whosoever believeth on him should not perish*: which is our third and last Stage.

III. The *End* and Purpose of this donation, of God's thus giving his only begotten Son; and that was, that through faith in him we might attain Salvation and Eternal Happiness. Where consider

1. The Benefit intended; *not to perish, but to have everlasting life.*

2. The Condition or Means of obtaining it; *whosoever believeth on him.*

*First*, Meditate on the *Benefit* and Blessing intended thee; and that

*Negatively*, a deliverance from Death, aggravated by the danger, a *perishing* condition; which is to be always dying, but never to die. Where consider also the common Calamity that all mankind is by nature involv'd in, and the ill fate that hangs over every mans head without Christ, that he is to *perish*.

And then *Positively*, as if a Negative happiness had not been enough for thee, a glorious Reward to boot; *to have everlasting life*: And here

1. Consider the thing in it self, *Life*; the greatest blessing we can enjoy, since all other blessings without *life* signifie nothing. For what good can honours and estates do a man when he is once dead? and that such a life, as is a life indeed; a heavenly life; a life of joy and blifs.

2. Consider the glorious Adjunct, and qualification of this life, that 'tis an *everlasting life*: and if we are so much concern'd in our labours and cares for a momentany life, how much more will it be worth our pains to secure and render happy that life which is never to know an end?

3. Consider the Certainty of the Tenure, that we are to *have* it and hold it, never more to part with it; to enjoy it without any eviction or molestation, and fully to possess it to all intents and purposes as our own inheritance.

*O my dear Soul!* meditate further on the *love* of God, that thou, who by nature art a child of wrath and perdition, one who hast by so many descents of sin Hell entailed upon thee even from thy first Progenitor downwards, and at thy first coming into the world wast an inheritrix of flames,

flames, and ever-induring never-to-be-indured torments, shouldst by Christ's coming into the world be instated and settled in the assurances of a blessed eternity!

O consider how infinitely better it had been for thee never to have been, had not Christ been born.

Consider infernal pains, and let them with their ghastly affrightments drive thee to thy Saviour.

Consider the joys and durable felicities of Heaven, and let them tempt thee to goodness, and invite thee to a sincere faith in thy Jesus, and think it worth thy while to serve him here, that thou may'st be for ever happy with him hereafter.

Thou hast life and death set before thee; consider well how thou makest thy choice, and be sure, whatever thou dost, to make sure of thy everlasting concerns, and not to be taken up by the way with any of the sorry fleeting, flattering, fluttering vanities of this life.

O faithful Creatour! O gracious Redeemer! O dear God! O sweet Jesu! who hast provided these hopes for us, these encouragements to thy service; having so inseparably annexed our Interest to our Duty, that our Piety will be the very *ratio formalis* of our happiness, and that which must necessarily fit us for our Eternal rewards, will also naturally bring us unto them.

Live therefore, *pious Soul*, live to thy Christ, and live in thy Christ by faith, that thou mayst live with thy Christ in the world to come by sight: For 'tis thy faith must bring thee thither.

2. That's the Condition of obtaining everlasting life; *whosoever believeth on him*. So that unbelievers are left still in their natural perishing condition, and in that desperate posture, that Christ himself, that Salvation it self, whilst they continue such, cannot save them.

1. Consider here the seeming easiness of this Condition; 'tis only to believe: and yet, such is the perverseness of our reasons, and the pravity of our wills, the extreme difficulty of it.

Alas! we that have the means of grace most plentifully afforded us, are too too many of us not easily to be prevail'd with to receive Christ by faith as we should do; and such is the generality of the Christian world now, that they are many, very many for their opinions and practices both, worse Infidels then any of those we commonly call so.

Faith, if it be a true, genuine, debonair, right-bred faith, regards the precepts as well as the promises, and receives Christ all over, as ready to obey him as to trust in him.

2: Consider the largeness of its Extent, what a compass this faith fetches; 'tis *whosoever*, whatsoever he be. Faith is as universal as Love. And the Catholick Church has no narrower bounds then the world it self has. All of all Nations, of all Conditions, are admittable into the household of Faith.

3. Consider lastly the Object of it; it must be *on him*, on Christ. Every body pretends to believe in God, the very name of *Atheist* is exploded long since out of the ingenuous world, and we have found out a handsomer term of *Deists* for it. Truly 'tis sad to think, that whilst the Students and Scholars, the bookish men among the Grand Senior's Subjects, as one that has been there lately informs us, begin to have some fair inclinations to the *Messias*; so many of our Refined Wits in Europe should account of Christ but as a Story, and make it their business, as well as sport,

John 14. 1.

Acts 4. 12.

sport, by prophane Drolleries to put Scripture out of countenance; in this shewing themselves inferiour to the common *Turks*, who, though fierce Enemies of Christianity, are taught by their very *Alcoran* to have an honourable Opinion of *Christ*, as a great Prophet, and the like of *Moses* too: their Impostor *Mahomet*, what he has of truth, or reason, or sense in that Riffraff Book of his, having by the help of *Sellam* a Renegado Jew, and one *Sergius* an Apostate Monk, taken it out of the Old and New Testament. But this *Deism* or bare acknowledgment of a God, so as to lay *Christ* and Scripture aside, will not serve the turn. *Te believe in God*, says *Christ*, *believe also in me*; and 'tis not the Name of *Jehova*, but the Name of *Jesus* of which 'tis said, that *there is no other Name under Heaven by which we are to be saved*; God having sent him into the world on purpose, that through faith in him the world might have life and salvation.

Now, *O my Soul*, at last consider the absolute Necessity of *believing*, if thou hast any kindness for thy self as well as for *Christ*, if thou art touch'd with any care of thy own great concern and future happiness.

This is the highest pitch of thy slight in all thy Meditations, and that which alone can make all the rest useful and comfortable to thee.

After all, if thou have not *Faith; God, and Love, and Christ, and Life*, and all will do thee no good, will stand thee in no stead at all.

'Tis thy *faith* must ascertain to thee all these glorious things.

O do not to thy own everlasting prejudice, and to the disappointment of all thy hopes, if thou hast any sense of a future state, do not, I say, defeat the purposes of Divine Love, and frustrate the design of *Christ's* coming into the world through thy unbelief.

God out of his *love* to thee, contrived a way how to save thee, and he sent his Son on purpose into the world to look after thee, and to find thee out; do not thou by thy infidelity damn thy self, for whose salvation so much has been done by the Father, so much suffered by the Son, the benefit of all which is forfeited to those only that disbelieve it.

Work thy self then into a generous *faith* in *Christ*, by strenuous reasons and earnest prayers, by deep considerations and fervent addressees to God, that, as he has out of his *love* to thee given thee his Son, so he would out of the same love give thee *faith* to receive him, and that he would shed that love abroad in thy heart, that thou may'st love him again, and may'st convince thy self of God's love to thee by that love thou hast for him; and by the argument of that *love* strengthen and bear up thy *faith*.

Consider that *faith* and *love* are the great managers of all business in the common affairs and dealings of the world; nor would people live safely in society by one another without a mutual confidence, and that God in this case demands no more of thee then what every man almost affords any other man he has to do with.

Consider that without *faith* all God's *love* and all *Christ's* merits are quite lost to thee, and thy self too lost into the bargain.

Consider how disingenuous 'tis, that so much should be done for thee, and yet that thou shouldst still unhandfomly distrust and slight the Person that did it all for thee.

Consider finally, that *faith* is the condition of the new Covenant between God and Men, seal'd in the blood of his Son, and that consequently 'tis that must give thee an Interest in *Christ*; and therefore if that be wanting, thou canst not plead *Christ* or Covenant, but art left out of all possibility of *Salvation*.  
Come



Come then to Christ in *faith*, as he came to thee in *love*. Come, *who-soever*, whatsoever thou art.

Be thou never so righteous, 'tis not that without *faith* will avail thee. Nor art thou to be justified by an inherent, but by an imputed righteousness, by the righteousness of *faith*; nor to be saved for the merit of thy own works, but for the merit of Christ's sufferings.

Be thou never so sinful, never so much oppressed with thy guilt, thy *faith* will fetch thee off: If the Law dun thee for debt, and pursue thee with its terrors, fly to thy surety by *faith*, and take out thy discharge: If an angry God summon thee, and call after thee, thou maist hide thy self *behind the tree*, as thy great Grandfather did in Paradise, and with better success, even behind the *Cross* of Christ. Weep over thy sins in his wounds, and mingle his sacred blood with thy penitent tears. Plead Christ's innocence and sufferings anent that charge, thy conscience brings in against thee. As thou dost by *faith* accept Christ at Gods hand for thy justification, so will he also accept him at thy hands for satisfaction. Gen. 3.8.

But then last of all, be we sure our *faith* be a right compleat *faith*, or else it will not be a saving *faith*. Receive we Christ in all his characters; as a *Prophet* to be instructed by him, and as a *King* to be ruled and governed by him, as well as a *Priest* to be reconciled and blest by him; And to our fiducial trust in his *merit*, let us add a diligent imitation of his *holly example*; and then he that is *the way and the truth and the life*, will through such a true living *faith* as this, bring us to everlasting life; which God of his love grant unto us all, through his only begotten Son *Jesus Christ*. Amen. John 14. 6.



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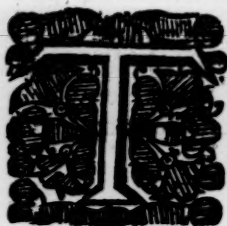
Of

## *Of the Divine Will for Mens Salvation.*

A Sermon Preached at *Guild-hall Chappel*, Sir *Robert Hanson* then Lord Mayor, *Feb. 5. 1671.*

I Tim. II. iv.

*Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*



IS a Caveat, which Mr. *Calvin* gives at the close of his Doctrine of *Decrees*, that Ministers would be very wary of proposing that his Doctrine to the people, for fear of giving them scandal and disturbance. For if a man should come to a Congregation and thus bespeak them; "*Friends and Christians*, I am here sent to you to preach the Gospel, but I must acquaint you aforehand, that there are but two or three among you, those that are the *Elect*, that are like to be ever the better for my Ministry; and as to the rest of you, there's *horribile decretum*, a dreadful Bar in your way, that all the preaching in the world can do you no good, and the Ordinances of Christ, apply to them as you will, can never prove available to your salvation; his hearers would run out of the Church, and cry the man were out of his wits. This just resentment was extorted from this pious man by an innocent reflexion upon his own *Scheme*.

I have for my part follow'd his advice in the choice of my *Theme*, which is so far from surprizing you with any startling apprehension, that it needs no *Preface* to court your attention, no *Argument* to recommend it to any mans acceptance, who has only Charity for his fellow-men, or indeed any kindness for himself; when he considers the diffused and unlimited love of *God his Saviour*, *who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

Besides that inconvenience, which that worthy *Author* himself takes notice of, there is another ill consequence, I have observ'd, that where that opinion, which limits and confines Gods love to particular persons and parties, obtains; it tinges mens spirits ordinarily with a fowr *leaven* of spiritual pride and censoriousness, that they look upon the rest of Mankind as *Reprobates*, and will hardly vouchsafe their fellow-Christian Friends or Governours, (if they be not of their set) an interest in their *Prayers*, an Office which Christianity hath obliged us frankly to perform for the very worst of our enemies.

This uncouth humour the Apostle seems here in this place to have made it his scope and drift to precaution. For having in the *first verse* of

of this Chapter, given order to *Timothy*, Bishop of *Ephesus*, for Church-Liturgy and Publick Devotions, that *Prayers and Supplications, &c. be made for all men*, in a full diffusion and extent of Christian Charity, in a more especial manner for *Governours*, *verse 2.* in whose safety the welfare of Societies is included: He backs that Order with two Reasons; 1. That God approves it and requires it now under the Gospel-ministration, *verse 3.* For this is good, and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. 2. From Gods own example, and the instance of his very great love, who earnestly desires the good of all mankind, and their everlasting happiness, and to that end has made discoveries of that will of his concerning our salvation, that all men may come to the knowledge of the truth revealed in the Gospel.

Wherefore I could not have chosen a fitter Subject of Discourse in this Presence, before you, *worthy Patriots and Inhabitants* of this populous City, then what I have now undertaken; which by laying before you the infinite measures of Divine Love towards you all, will be apt in the sense of that love to bind your hearts in a mutual love and friendship to one another. And for an Essay of this, let me desire you to joyn with me in that duty, the necessity whereof *S. Paul* here makes out from that love of God, that *Prayers and Supplications be made for all men*, inasmuch as *God will have all men to be saved.*

Let us pray then to God our Saviour for all Mankind, *Jews, Turks, Heathens*, that he would save them by bringing them to the knowledge of his truth; for the holy Catholick Church, &c.

Let us continue and improve these our prayers for this ancient and famous City, our English Jerusalem, that peace may be within her walls, and plenteousness in all her Palaces. That God would bless her Government and Governours; The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen his Brethren, the two Sheriffs, together with all her Inhabitants from the richest to the poorest. That he would prosper them all in their persons and posterities, in their basket and their store, in their going out and their coming in, in their worldly estates and their eternal welfare. Psal. 122.7.  
Deut. 28.5,6.

Lastly, let us intreat a blessing upon our selves here assembled, &c. recommending these our prayers, together with our selves, to the Father of mercies, in the name and words of his well-beloved Son, as himself hath taught us to pray;

Our Father, &c. ———

The Words are so plain, that they need no explication; yet to give some light to our ensuing Discourse, give me leave to run them over with a brief and familiar paraphrase.

Who] then, that is, *God our Saviour*; not God under the notion of a Creator, though he's faithful in that sense too, and has a hearty love and intire affection for all his Creatures; for he hateth nothing that he hath made, and his mercy is over all his works: Yet the Covenant of Nature being forfeited and cancelled, 'tis now *God our Saviour* we have to do with; we stand upon other terms, under other obligations, with him now in the time of the Gospel. 1 Pet. 4. 19.  
Psal. 145.9.

He will have] *seen*, he desires it, he wishes our happiness as much, nay more then we our selves can; as being in Christ our Father after a peculiar manner, he has earning bowels of compassion for us; and more, as a mother, he has a teeming womb of mercy, and full breasts of consolation.



Luke 7. 30.

Phil. 2. 12.

Ezek. 33. 11.

lation. He has *design'd* the salvation of men by his eternal counsel, if men themselves do not defeat his will, and disappoint his purpose, as the *Pharisees* are said to have done. Further, he *commands* and requires of us not to be wanting to our selves, but to *work out our salvation*; assuring us that he delights not in the death of a sinner, and expostulating with us, *why will ye die?* And lastly, he supplies us with all *means* necessary for our so doing in order to that end.

*All men*] that is, every man in the world, no one excepted, no one excluded, but who wilfully exclude themselves, and do not vouchsafe him the acceptance of his proffer'd grace: The universality of Mankind, not *all believers only*, not *all of all sorts*, but all as we are bound to pray for in the *first verse*, and that's *all whatsoever*, every individual person of the World. For so the Argument stands, *let prayers*, all kind of prayers, *be made for all men*, for their salvation, for their conversion; Why? because *God our Saviour will have all men to be saved*. All men are capable of the benefit of our prayers, therefore all men are to be pray'd for.

*To be saved,*] What's that? To escape the *sins* of this life, and the *miseries* of the next; to get from under the bondage of natural corruption, and that wrath which it subjects us unto; to recover by *Christ* out of that lost condition we are in by *Adam*, and to regain a state of holiness and happiness. And that by

John 1. 17.

John 14. 6.

*Coming to the knowledge of the truth,*] by imbracing the *Gospel*, and entertaining that Doctrine which *Christ* our Saviour brought into the world, which is to lead us into *all saving truth*; for *grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*, and he himself is *the way and the life and the truth*; the *Way* to direct us, the *Life* to reward us, and the *Truth* to set us free, that we may come into that *way*, and attain that *life*.

The *Doctrine* which may be raised hence is this: *That it is Gods importunate Desire and earnest Design, no less then his peremptory Command, that all men may be improv'd in their spiritual estate, and may finally attain everlasting happiness.* I say, *God desires and designs the spiritual good and eternal welfare of all men.*

Psal. 12. 2.

I know there's an usual distinction of the *Will of God* brought in here to this place of Scripture; *Voluntas signi*, & *Voluntas beneplaciti*, his secret and his revealed will, a Will of *commands*, and a Will of *decrees*: but we cannot without horrible impiety imagine, that God should have two wills, so that one of them should contradict the other; or impute that high dissimulation upon Gods goodness, that he should speak to us *with a heart and a heart*, as 'tis in the *Psalms*; that he should so passionately invite men to salvation, and proffer them grace, whereby they may be saved, when he has aforehand by absolute decree ordered it otherwise, and from all eternity irreversibly determin'd their condition. With what sense could the Apostle say, *God will have all men to be saved*, and with what consequence could he from thence exhort us to *pray for all men*, if it be not Gods *desire* and *design* as well as his *command* to have all men converted and sav'd?

The Doctrine we shall make out by ten *Propositions*; such all of them as naturally grow out of the *Text*, and in that dependence upon one another, that who grants one must grant all, and the disproving of any one calls all the rest in question, and overthrows the whole Scheme.

Be-

Before I treat of them singly, I shall name them to you altogether, that you may the better perceive their rise from the words, and their coherence among themselves.

1. *God has an universal love for the souls of men.* This is the very bottom of the *Text* upon which 'tis grounded, and hence 'tis that *he will have all men to be saved, &c.*

2. *The eternal Covenant made with us in Christ includes all men.* For 'tis God our Saviour, who will have all men to be sav'd; and no salvation is to be had, but by Christ upon Covenant.

3. *Christ according to that Covenant made satisfaction for the sins of all men.* Else the Covenant would not answer its end; for if the Covenant were for all, the satisfaction of Christ must be for all, that all might be sav'd.

4. *The Gospel, which is the Instrument of the Covenant, was to be published and made known to all men.* For otherwise, how should all men come to the knowledge of the truth, whereby they may be saved?

5. *Election, which is the determination of this good will of God to particular Objects, is founded upon that Covenant and Satisfaction made by Christ, and consequently must proceed according to it.* So that it lies not on Gods part, but upon their own, if any miscarry. Hence it follows, that

6. *Election, though it be an act of Gods free grace in Christ, yet being founded on a Covenant, is in its nature conditional.* He will have all men to be sav'd, if they be qualified for salvation; and he will have them to be qualified; it will be their own fault if they be not.

7. *Election has a double prospect, a twofold influence upon the end and the means both.* He will have all men to be saved; there's the End: and to come to the knowledge of the truth; there's the Means.

8. *God absolutely wills no man's damnation.* 'Tis expressly said, that *he will have all men to be sav'd*; and therefore the fault will lie at mens own doors if they miscarry.

9. *Every one has allow'd him by God sufficient means to save him, or at least to render him inexcusable.* For he will have all men, as to be saved, so to come to the knowledge of the truth.

10. In the last place, the upshot of all is, that *We are to give God the praise of his grace in our well-doing, and our salvation, and to take to our selves the shame and blame of our miscarriage.*

I. *Gods love is universal to the souls of men.* We do not speak now of all his Creatures, as he's the Father of the Universe; so the Psalmist tells us, that *He opens his hand, and fills every thing living with his blessings*; but of Men, and that not as to temporal favours, his ordinary provisions and preservations, of which every man may observe, in the Diary of his life, many and wonderful instances; but of Gods special love, as to his grace and saving mercies. *He will have all men to be saved*; Why? but for his mercies sake; he will have mercy because he will have mercy. I. Psal. 104. 28.

Now as there's no reason for this but his *mercy*, so there is no reason why that mercy of his should not be universal; *all men* to him being alike, their condition alike, alike his Creatures, alike in Christ beloved.

Why this love of his to the *souls* of men? because they are near akin to him, of a Divine extraction and original. He's the Father of Spi- Hebr. 12. 9. rits;

Pfal. 8.5.

rits; he made man little lower then the Elohim, and in this respect he indued the soul of man with eminent and God-like advantages, made it unbounded in its operations, infinite in its duration, of a vast activity, and of an immortal being.

At the first creation he made it *innocent* and *happy*, in the enjoyment of its God, being irradiated from the miroir of Divine understanding, and assisted by grace; and after the fall, he design'd it to be recover'd by Christ in *pristinum nitorem*, to its former brightness.

Why this love *universal* to the souls of all men? They are all alike to him, because all alike from him. As a Father to his Children, he may have a particular affection to *one*, but he has a common love to *all*.

'Tis then a piece of arrogance and unsufferable pride, for any man or number of men, to appropriate this love of God to himself, or to his own party, so as to exclude all others; God having intended that all mankind should share in his goodness.

II.

II. *The eternal Covenant made with Christ includes all men.* If all men were to be saved, it must be by the common Saviour. Now what reason is there to exclude any, since *all are concluded under sin*? and it was his design and only business he came into the world about, to *save sinners*.

Gal. 3.22.

1 Tim. 1.15.

This the signal expression of his love to the souls of men. God so lov'd the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, says S. John in his Gospel, which he further descants upon in his Epistle, *In this was the love of God made manifest*, that he loved us first, and that whilst we were sinners, enemies.

John 3.16.

1 John 4.9,10.

But this was to be done for us by way of *Covenant*, wherein Christ was to be the Undertaker and Surety for us. The former Covenant being broken and laid aside, a new one was to be made, not of *works*, (that we were not able to perform before,) but of *grace*; Christ answering for us by his merit, and inabling us by his Spirit, for the performance of our part. It was for me, for you, for us all, because 'twas done in our nature. For

*First*, he took not up a single person, to wit, of *Peter* or *John*, &c. but the common nature of man, (which he united to his own person) which nature universally all men partaking of, all might have an equal claim to the benefits of it.

2. He was to be the second *Adam*, the representative of all mankind, in what he was to do, as the first *Adam* was in what he did; that *as by one mans transgression sin came into the world*, and after that *death upon all men*; so *by the obedience of one man many might be made righteous*, as many, *viz.* as should believe in him; and that *as in Adam all die, so in Christ might all be made alive*.

Rom. 5. 12,19.

1 Cor. 15. 22.

3. 'Tis consequent to Gods love that all should be included in the Covenant. For how is it said, *He will have all to be saved*, if all are not concern'd in the Covenant, by which we are to be sav'd? And so it follows in the *fifth* and *sixth verses*, *For there's one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all*.

The Covenant then, of which he was Mediator, was not made only for some few, but for all. But still we must remember, that this love of God to us, to all men in his Son, is a love in *Covenant*, which supposeth terms and conditions on both sides.

III.



III. *Christ made satisfaction according to that Covenant for the sins of all men.* For if the Covenant was made in the name and behalf of all, the benefit was to redound to all; Christ's *merit* and *satisfaction* being adequate to its purposes, and as universal as the *Covenant* it self, as the *love* of God, was. Hereupon 'tis said, that *he took away the sins of the world*, and that *he tasted death unto death, for every man*, for every individual person. III.  
John 1. 29.  
Hebr. 2. 9.

To say, that he satisfied *sufficiently*, not *efficiently*, is a frigid and insignificant distinction. If God will have *all men to be saved*, Christ was to die then for all; else it could not be. So that to confine *Christs satisfaction* to some few, is to lessen the love of God, and to derogate from the honour of Christ.

Why then are not *all* actually sav'd, since God design'd and Christ intended salvation for all men? We must remember, as I said, that this business is manag'd by way of *Covenant*. The mercy of God is convey'd to us by *Christ* upon condition of *faith* and *repentance*. Though it be a *Covenant of grace*, we are under the obligations of a *Covenant* still. So then as Christ died *for sin*, we must die *to it*, and as he rose again for our justification, so we must rise with him to newness of life. Rom. 4. 25.

Wherefore that *all* mankind is not actually sav'd, it is not from this, that salvation to all was not actually *intended* by God, or not actually *effected* by Christ; but because 'tis not actually *applied* to by all.

How then is *Christ* said to be *the Saviour of the world*, and to have wrought salvation for us? It was by putting all men into a possibility of being sav'd, and by recovering us all into a salvable condition. Every individual man and woman in the world by *Christ* is brought into a capacity of mercy; nor is it want of *love* in God, or of *merit* in Christ, who was design'd for the benefit and good of all men; but it is want of care in us, if we miss of the *common salvation*, as St. *Jude* terms it. John 4. 42.  
Jude 3.

This advantage then, this encouragement we have by *Christs satisfaction*, that 'tis not any sin we have committed, can damn us, but *infidelity* only and *impenitence*; for these being incompatible with the tenour and terms of the *Covenant*, bring the guilt of all our sins back upon us.

Why the purpose of *God's love* and *Christs satisfaction* do's not prove effectual to any person, is not from God or Christ, that that *love* or *satisfaction* was scanty; but from the persons self, that he puts himself into an incapacity of those intended favours. So 'tis said plainly of the *Pharisees*, *Luke 7. 30.* that they defeated *the counsel of God*, which was for their good, and made it to be of none effect.

IV. *The Gospel, which is the declaration of that Covenant, was to be publish'd to all men:* Else how should all men come to the knowledge of the truth? 'Tis the *Promulgation* ratifies the *Law*. This was done by the Apostles, according to their Commission, to go into all the world, and to preach the Gospel to every creature, *ἡν ἡ κτίσις*, to the whole creation; an essay whereof they gave at *Pentecost*, when they made known *Magnalia Dei*, the great and wonderful things of God in his Son to some of all Nations under Heaven, that were then met at *Jerusalem*. Hence the *Psalmist* prophesies, or rather by way of History relates, that *there's neither speech nor language, where their voice was not heard*, and that their line went forth throughout the world. IV.  
Mark 16. 15.  
A&S 2. 11.  
Psal. 19. 3.4.

God even in the times of *Heathen* ignorance, did not leave himself without witness; much more hath he declar'd himself now under the Gospel-state. This was that *mystery which had been hid from ages*, and was made known to us in the ends of the world.

The love of God, the Covenant of grace, the History of Christ, his Death and Resurrection, the whole will of God concerning our salvation, are fully discover'd and laid open in the Gospel: For though the Covenant had been sure on God's part and Christ's without this publication, yet it would not have been so on ours; for we could not be saved without coming to the knowledge of the truth, by understanding the terms of the Covenant on our side, which we are oblig'd to perform.

*Faith comes by hearing*, you'll say; some men never heard. This may easily be answer'd; some wilfully reject, and so have it not; others that have it, forfeit, and so justly loose it. This we shall speak to more particularly by and by. In the mean while this is sure, That Christ is that light which enlightneth every man that cometh into the world; and that this will be the condemnation of all, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light.

V. The Election of grace, which is the determination of that will of God to particular objects, is grounded upon the Covenant made with Christ. Wherefore the whole proceeding of God in that affair is managed according to Gospel-terms; so that whosoever believes, and repents, and endeavours after holiness, and leads a life becoming the Gospel; whosoever do's this, and none else, his sins shall never prejudice him in his eternal state, as one that has an unquestionable interest in Christ, and may make a fair challenge of God's love in him upon the strict rules of justice; For he gave him to that end, that whosoever believes in him should not perish. God hath chosen us in Christ, Eph. 1. 4. that is, by his means and for his sake; 'tis for Christ's merit he chooseth us, not for any merit of ours; 'tis not indeed for our faith and repentance we are chosen, though those are the conditions, and there's none chosen without them.

But if he will have all men to be saved, Why are not all elected? For 'tis said, many are called, but few are chosen. Not to say the Greek word *καλεσται*, as also the Hebrew *בחרים*, (as it is generally mistaken) is not a Participle denoting an action done upon us without us, but an Adjective, and signifies a qualification in us; many are called; that is, many are outward Professors, but few are chosen, that is, there are few choice men, few true believers: It is, because Election, as has been said, is upon Covenant.

Otherwise, what reason can be given, why out of the mass of Mankind, all being alike liable to one common destruction, some few should be exempted, and all the rest left to perish? God being no respecter of persons.

It is not by absolute will, (as some fancy) but according to his good pleasure in Christ, that all was done, as appears in that forementioned place to the Ephesians, a most illustrious and comprehensive passage as any in the New Testament, where he goes through the whole Series and Method of our salvation, wrought by Christ, from the third verse to the twelfth, and lays it all in all its instances upon Christ, that we were chosen in him, and predestin'd to the adoption of children by him, &c. as well as we are redeem'd by him, and justified by him; so that *cuncta salutis*, the whole golden chain of our salvation, link by link, is fastned

in

in Christ alone. And in the 10<sup>th</sup> verse he tells us, what *that mystery of God's will according to his good pleasure was*, viz. *that in the dispensation of the fulness of time, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are in earth, even in him*; where the gathering together in one all things in Christ, has the same meaning as what's elsewhere said, that *he was reconciling the world to himself in Christ*. 2 Cor. 5. 19;

It was then for *Christ's sake*, and by his means, according to that *Covenant* he made with the Father in our behalf and stead, that God has elected any.

And this I doubt not to affirm, was the fundamental mistake in those that broach'd that rigid uncomfortable Doctrine of *absolute Election and Reprobation*, that God from all eternity purpos'd to save only some few, & then afterward design'd *Christ* only as an instrument and means to bring those few to him, and so sent him into the world only for the sake of those few; having resolv'd aforehand, that none besides should be e're the better for a Saviour: an Opinion as full of presumption and uncharitableness on one hand, as of discomfort and despair on the other. I say, their mistake was, that they made the *decree of Election* antecedent to the *Covenant with Christ*, which it self is called the *Decree*, *Psal. 2. 7.* whereas *Christ's* undertakings and performances are the ground of all transactions betwixt God and Men; and therefore the *Covenant* and his *Satisfaction* upon it is of necessity to be presuppos'd to *Election*, as the ground and bottom of it; for *he has chosen us in him*.

VI. *Election, though an act of God's free grace in Christ, yet being founded upon a Covenant is in its nature conditional.* This his *will* to have *all men saved* is not *absolute*, but a thing of choice; an act of judgment, as well as will.

'Tis an act of *free grace*, by reason God might have let all mankind perish, only his mercy moved him; he might have spar'd his Son, his love to us made him severe to the well-beloved. Thus it was *free* in respect of God, nor is it less free in respect of Us too, as having no merit to challenge it; *He do's not deal with us after our sins*; and yet for Psal. 103. 10. all this it has conditions annexed, both on Gods part and ours too: *On God's part*, in regard of *Christ's* merit, who has purchas'd salvation for us, God stands obliged, so that *if we confess our sins, he is not only merciful, but faithful and just to forgive us our sins*; so *S. John*: and on 1 John 1. 9. *ours*, *Faith and Repentance*, by coming to the knowledge of the truth, and by living according to it.

'Tis not then God's *absolute will*, an absolute irrespective *decree*, by which he will have all men or any man to be sav'd, but his declared will and good pleasure according to Gospel-terms.

Further, though 'tis *God's grace* do's all for us, in us, and by us, and works all our good works; for *'tis he that worketh in us both to will and to do*, by his preventing grace exciting our will, and by his assisting grace inabling us to every good work: This very grace of his is upon condition; for God is oblig'd to give it, and we may demand it by virtue of the *Covenant*, nor will it be denied to any one that with humble sincerity seeks it, and applies himself faithfully and industriously to the means; and we for our parts are oblig'd to seek it, and to make good use of it when we have it. 'Tis *we must will and do, we must be willing, and we must be doing, and work out our Salvation*; nor must we look for miracles from an irresistible grace. Phil. 2. 13;



VII. VII. Again, *Election* has a twofold prospect and a double influence upon *End* and *Means* both: To be saved, there's the *End*; and to come to the knowledge of the truth, the *Means*. The design of salvation was first laid, and then followed contrivance of means, according to that Maxim, *Primum in intentione, ultimum in executione*. Neither of them could be compleat without the other: Both are to be taken together. He that makes not use of the *means*, must not presume of the *end*, nor ought any one to despair of the *end* that do's make good use of the *means*.

The *End* first is not to be fancied without the *Means*, salvation without knowledge and practice of truth. And this serves to take down *presumption* and security, as though all lay on God's part, and we were to do nothing: he has not decreed to save any man without using the means.

Nor again is the later to be parted from the former; for where the *means* are, the *end* may be attain'd, where there is *knowledge of truth*, there salvation is to be had: For the *means*, if rightly applied to, will be effectual to the *end*, for which they are appointed. And this is matter of great comfort and encouragement, to bear us up against *despair*.

Thou then, that fanciest thy self *Elect*, that God has decreed thee for salvation; How dost thou make it out? Take heed of presuming; do not tempt God by an over-weening confidence, and a spiritual pride and carnal security; but *make thy calling and election sure*.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Matth. 19. 23.

Luke 16. 9.

1 Tim. 6. 17, 18.

Prov. 3. 9.

Dan. 4. 23.

פרק abrupt,

item redemit.

Our Saviour tells us, that it is a very difficult thing for a *rich man* to be saved: and thereupon he advises such to *make themselves friends* of their unrighteous *Mammon*; and his Apostle charges us to *charge them that are rich to do good, to distribute and communicate*. Now if such a man honour God with his substance, and break off or buy off his iniquities with charity, then his riches are *means* indeed; otherwise wealth is no sign of God's favour, but as a man uses it. For such things are but common blessings, and if abused turn to curses. In the like manner *Gospel-privileges*, the *means of Grace* and *Ordinances of Christ*, if not put to right use, will be so far from saving any one, that they will serve only to aggravate peoples condemnation.

On the contrary, thou, *poor Soul*, that doubtest of God's goodness, and seeing so few are *chosen*, mistrustest thy self, that thou art none of that small number: Dost thou apply to those *means* God has afforded thee? Dost thou *pray, read*, frequent God's *House* and *Ordinances*? Dost thou with an honest heart inquire after *truth* to know it? And dost thou endeavour to practise what thou knowest? Be of good cheer: If thou dost thy part, to be sure God will do his in pardoning thy infirmities, in accepting thy sincere (though never so weak) performances, and in enabling thee and giving thee more and more grace, till he has brought thee to glory.

VIII.

VIII. God do's not absolutely will or design any man's damnation. He will have *all men* to be sav'd, none by his good will to be damned; he wills not the death of a sinner.

Ezek. 33. 11.

Far be it from our *faithful Creator*, to make any poor soul on purpose to damn it. He's no *Tyrant* to design the miseries or take delight in the tormens and shrieks of his poor Creatures.

1 Tim. 1. 15.

Far be it from our *gracious Saviour*, who came into the world to save sinners, to have any such thoughts of unkindness. *Christ* is now advanced in his mediatorial Kingdom, and *Regum est parcere subjectis*, 'tis the

the concern of Kings to be tender of their Subjects lives and concerns. Even *Laws*, as well as *Privileges*, are to secure mens lives and properties, not to insnare them.

And yet as there are *penal Laws* for capital Offences; so we must know, that God and Christ, as they are *merciful*, so they are *just* also. No Government can be managed otherwise; the reason and ground of its institution being to be a *terroure to evil works*, and an encouragement to the good. To apply, what the *Apostle* says of the Civil Magistrate; *Wouldst thou then not be afraid of the power of God and the wrath of the Lamb? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.* Rom. 13. 3.

But how comes it to pass, if he will have *all men* to be sav'd, that so many are damn'd, so few sav'd? For *who hath resisted his will?* 'Tis not, I tell you again, an *absolute will*, this will of his; but upon condition of thy *faith and repentance*. Look well to thy self, whether thou perform thy condition; and charge not thy miscarriage on God's justice and severity, but on thy own wickedness and folly. 'Tis not God damns thee, but thy self, who through *thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up to thy self wrath against the day of wrath.* Rom. 9. 19. Rom. 2. 5.

So the *Apostle* states it, Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. That *God will render to every man according to his deeds; To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; But unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath; Tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil; But glory and honour and peace to every man that worketh good.* The ground of all is in the 11<sup>th</sup> verse; *For there is no respect of persons with God.* His rewards and punishments are not distributed by any uncertain rule of an arbitrary favour or displeasure, but are squar'd exactly to *justice*, and proportion'd to mens demerits. *Thy destruction is of thyself, O Israel*, says God by the Prophet. The children of disobedience then are the only *children of perdition*; they that walk in the ways of perdition, that sling away their mercies, and will be damn'd because they will be damn'd. Hof. 13. 9.

IX. *Every man has sufficient means allow'd him by God to render him at the least inexcusable:* and these *means*, be they more or less, if well used, are improveable, through grace, to his gracious acceptance, who expects to reap in proportion only to his sowing. The *Parable* makes this out in each part; Every one had his Talent; he that had but one might have improv'd it to reward; 'twas his own neglect and sloth that he did not. IX. Luke 19. 13.

Some reject the *means*, and then 'tis their own fault they have them not; Others neglect the use, and forfeit the advantage of them; Others abuse grace, and turn it to wantonness; Others under the use of means harden their hearts, and resist the grace proffer'd.

'Tis frequent to say, *God did not give such a man grace*; it was because 'twas refused then, or because 'twas abus'd, according to the Moral of that Parable, *To him that hath, that is, useth what he hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, that is, useth not what he hath, shall be taken away even that which he hath:* which two will pass for reasons why some *Pagans* perhaps never had the Gospel, because they neglect those means which they already have; and why it is taken away from them that had it, because they abus'd it: and in such instances as these, what wonder, if men be not sav'd, Luke 19. 26.

when they do not *come to the knowledge of the truth*? But then they must acknowledge, 'tis their own fault they do not; it is not to be charged upon God; he's not wanting to them, 'tis they are wanting to themselves.

And this may be made good even under the Law, though the *Jews* were his *peculium*, and the Church was confin'd to *Palestine*, yet light broke out even then among the *Heathens*, and prov'd effectual to those who made good use of it. Thus *Job*, though an *Edomite*, out of the *Pale*, yet was a Holy man, and became a holy Pen-man; and *Balaam* himself, though a *Moabite*, had converse with God, but his covetousness perverted him. There were also in that Church many *Proselytes*, and that by God's special direction, who has accordingly provided in their Laws for them. This much more in *Gospel*-times, *Christ* having been design'd to be a light to lighten the *Gentiles*, as well as to be the glory of his people *Israel*.

Luke 2.32.

And yet notwithstanding this free and liberal allowance, it is just with God to withdraw his grace at last after many frustraneous tryals and frequent disappointments of it; when the Divine forbearance, which should lead men to repentance, through their own wilful obstinacy, proves an occasion of hardning their hearts, as *S. Basil* observes in *Pharaohs* case, who having all along under a course of judgments hardned himself, was at last judicially hardned by God, and set up for a Trophee of his justice, who had lived hitherto a Monument of his mercy; which is the very meaning of that Scripture quoted by *S. Paul*, *Rom. 9. 17.* *Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee*, according to the *Septuagint*, ἐξήγειρά, I have raised thee up; in the *Hebrew*, העמתיך I have made thee to stand, preserved thee amidst those judgments I have shew'd upon thee and thy people, and kept thee alive hitherto; as if he had said, I have therefore, on purpose, endured thee, a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction, with so much long-suffering, that I might at length shew my wrath upon thee, and make my power known to the world, by some signal vengeance; as 'tis exprest in the 22<sup>th</sup> verse of that Chapter, in the general case of all such obstinate impenitent sinners.

Rom. 2.4.  
'Η τῶ Θεῷ μα-  
κροθυμία  
σκληροκαρδί-  
ας αἰτία.

X. Lastly, the upshot of all, that *It is the grace of God by which we are sav'd, and a man's own wickedness and impenitence, for which he is damned.* God is to have the glory of our well-doing, and we to take to our selves the shame of our miscarriages. His will was to save us, but we our selves are cruel to our own souls: for the wages of sin is death still under the Gospel.

Rom. 6.23.

Had we then but that love for our selves as he has, how well might it be with us, and how happy might we be? For *his compassions never fail*, but are renew'd from morning to morning, from night to night. He invites us to repentance, and gives us further space and longer time for it; he do's us good all our days and no hurt, nothing that would be so, if we our selves were good, and orders all his dispensations, whether of *Providence* or *Grace*, to our everlasting good.

Lam. 3. 22, 23.

To recapitulate the whole in short. He did from all eternity, out of a merciful sense of our sinful and miserable condition, design and provide salvation for us, covenanted with his Son in our behalf, and accepted of his mediation, and in the fulness of time sent him to dye for our sins; to the satisfaction of his justice, and has proclaim'd the glad tidings of our deliverance in the Gospel over the world, and by virtue of that Cove-

nant



*nant* was resolv'd, and was obliged to take us into the *election* of grace, would we for our parts but make good our *condition* in that Covenant, by receiving his *Christ* as our *Jesus*, and renouncing those sins of ours, which he died for, and make good use of those *means* he hath afforded us; nor has he by any over-ruling *decree* forestall'd our way to happiness, but has left it open and free to all that will come, and calls upon us by his *word* and *spirit* to come, and with great importunity courts us to happiness, to the conviction of every man's own Conscience, which will one day witness against him, and acquit God when he judges; and has (we cannot deny it) allow'd us sufficient means; nor has he been wanting to us in any thing that may help us to *Heaven*.

Wherefore it will be our greater condemnation, if after all these *advantages*, these *opportunities* and *importunities*, we fall short. But if through the Means of that *grace*, which is offered to us, we attain the *End*, even the salvation of our Souls, then we shall have infinite reason to all eternity to bless God, and give him the *glory* of his *grace*. 1 Pet. 1.9.

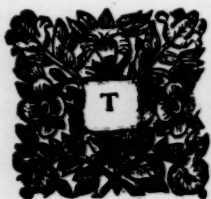
*Now to God our faithful Greatour and gracious Redeemer, be all praise, honour and glory. Amen.*

## Of the Conversion of a Sinner.

A Sermon Preached in Guild-ball Chappel,  
Sir William Hooker then Lord Mayor,  
Aug. 16. 1674.

Ezek. XVIII. xxvii.

*When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.*



הוודה *confite-  
ri, laudare.*

HIS Sentence I have now read to you, our Church hath set at the very entrance of her *Liturgy*; when being assembled and met together in publick and solemn manner with those wholesome Forms she hath put into our mouths to *praise* God, and to *pray* unto him with, (which is the main business of *worship*) we are taught to commence our addresses to our merciful Father, first with the acknowledgment of our own unworthiness, and the confession of our sinfulness. Such *confession* tending much to the glory of God's *justice* and his *mercy* both; so that to *confess* to God is in the Psalmist's language to praise him, to exalt him in our own abasements.

And that people may not mistake themselves in this business of Confession, or imagine that a bare slubberly saying over the words, without hearty resentments, will serve the turn; or that having confessed their sins they may sin on still, and renew their provocations with their acknowledgments; she hath prefaced this Office with some pertinent and useful *Texts of Scripture*, partly to exhort us to the practice of the *duty*, partly to direct us in the *performance* of it, and partly to encourage us by the *example* of others.

*This* then which stands in the front, is the ground and bottom of all; that our confession of sin must be accompanied with an actual detestation of it, and aversion from it, and with a sincere resolution of leading a new life, without which we do but mock God and deceive our selves. But if we be in earnest, if we thus confess our sins to God, as the Church hath here out of holy Writ instructed us to do; then our confessions will find acceptance, and our souls shall live.

*For when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, which he has committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* A Text, wherein you will find the sum of all practical

ctical Divinity, the great end and design of all Preaching, and whatever other Ordinances, which is to bring us to God, and to save our souls alive at the last.

In these Words we have *two* things plainly and expressly set down; the *nature* and the *consequent* of the duty of Repentance, and a *third* thing strongly implied, though not directly express; namely the *possibility* of performing it.

For be the duty never so rational and agreeable to the true constitution and nature of man to *repent*, i. e. *to turn away from his wickedness*, and to do that which is *lawful and right*, be it never so advantageous and necessary both to my present happiness here, and to my eternal welfare hereafter, as that which is to save my *soul alive*: Yet if it be not possible for me to do it; if after all this *reason*, which convinces me, and *necessity*, which constrains me to repent, repentance be not at all in my power, the obligation seems void, no body being oblig'd to attempt impossibilities; the ground of all Debates being this, whether the thing proposed be feasible or no; and if not, there is a stop put to all further deliberation.

I. *First*, I say, here is the *nature* of Repentance, and that made up of two acts. I.

1. An aversion from sin; that *the wicked man turn away from his wickedness that he hath committed*.

2. A conversion to God; and that he *do that which is lawful and right*; i. e. those things which God requires of him in his word and declared will.

For as the *ratio formalis* of sin lies in turning from God to the Creature; so the true nature of Repentance consists in turning from sin to God; so that we may from these words draw a right and perfect definition of Repentance, that *Repentance is a man's turning from the wickedness which he hath committed, and his doing that which is lawful and right*.

II. *Secondly*, Here's the *Consequent* of such Repentance; that he that thus repents *shall save his soul alive*; i. e. that he shall be justified in the sight of God and eternally sav'd. And this is that which is *expressed*. II.

III. In the *last* place we have that which is *implied*; the *possibility* of the duty, so far as it is to be perform'd by us. *When the wicked man turneth from his wickedness, and doth that which is lawful and right*; which implies that as he is oblig'd in duty to turn from his wickedness, and to do good, so that he is furnished with strength and power to do this duty: that as he must repent, and that upon no less peril then of damnation; so he may and can repent too, if he will, with God's assisting grace, which is never wanting to those that humbly and sincerely seek his help, to his salvation. III.

In the handling of these Heads I shall cast my Discourse into as useful a *method* as I can, for the directing of *practice*, rather then disputing of *controversy*. Yet so, as to clear the ground, by removing some *prejudices* which ly in the way, and may incline men either on the one hand to *presumption*, if it be in their own power to repent when they will; or on the other hand to *despair*, if it be not at all in the power or will of man, but that he wholly depends upon the motions and actings of a superior irresistible cause upon his will and natural faculties. And this I shall do by shewing how far a *man* is obliged to act, and how far he may



may go of himself in this difficult and necessary work ; and how far God has obliged himself to assist him by his grace , and accept him in what he do's according to that power of nature.

I. I. The Nature of Repentance ; to turn away from wickedness, and to do that which is lawful and right.

1 Pet. 3. 11.  
Horat.

1. First, To turn from wickedness ; this the negative part according to that, *Let him eschew evil and do good*. And that according to the very Morality of the Heathens, *Virtus est vitium fugere*, &c. Not to be vitious is the rudiment of Vertue, and 'tis the beginning of Wisdom to leave off playing the fool.

'Tis as in the reconciliation of those that are fal'n at odds, to lay down all animosities and grudges, to forbear all unkind words and injurious actions as formerly pass'd ; and on the contrary, to make out all demonstrations of friendship in good turns and offices of love. So 'tis betwixt the sinner and God. Sins are trespasses, the greatest enmities, the only things God is offended with. The Devil himself is his enemy meerly upon this account, otherwise a glorious and excellent Creature.

First then sin is to be forsaken, by which we formerly provoked God, and then he forgives us ; and next our love to him afterward is to be evidenced in a due obedience to his commands, and a fair compliance with his will, in doing all those things that are well-pleasing to him ; and then he accepts us.

Now this turning from wickedness being a very hard work, nothing more difficult than to throw off habits once contracted ; Let us therefore by a gradual deduction shew the right way of proceeding, what course a new Convert, that turns from his wickedness, usually takes. And that is,

1. To arm and fortifie his reason against his sin.
2. To alienate and withdraw his affections.
3. Carefully to avoid all occasions, and resist those temptations that would bring him back.
4. At least, to forbear and restrain the gross action.

1. To fortifie the reason or understanding with all arguments against it : For conviction is suppos'd as the very bottom of this work of Repentance. Till a sinner be convinced of the turpitude and danger of his way that he is in, 'tis not to be hop'd that he will ever leave it : and this is in the judgment or understanding part at the barr of Conscience, where the man judges himself, that he may not be judg'd ; for Conscience in a man is God's Deputy, and acts under him and for him.

1 Cor. 11. 31.

Now I begin with the understanding as first to be recovered ; because that likely is last corrupted and debauched, partly by the senses and carnal appetite, and partly by the will, which being once won over, checks and awes the understanding. Here we are to go backward, to unravel the Clew.

The arguments to convince a man's self are partly moral, partly civil and external ; such as are the vileness of thy lusts, which make thee live a life not suitable to the excellency of thy nature, the ill consequence of it, in provoking God and making him thy Enemy, and in exposing thy soul to eternal ruins. Again, the discredit and disparagement ; the damage and loss of time, health, estate, they run thee into ; the trouble and vexation they procure thee, and the little satisfaction they give thee in lieu of all those inconveniencies, of all those hazards and dangers they put thee upon.

2. To

2. *To wean the affections*; and this will not be very difficult, when the *understanding* is once convinced. But here's the fault; *My people*, Hof. 4. 6. says the Prophet, are *destroy'd for lack of knowledge, or perish for want of understanding*, i. e. for want of consideration: they understand well enough, but will not give themselves time to consider.

Upon this *conviction* will naturally follow a loathing and detestation of thy sin; an ingenuous sorrow for having offended a gracious God, a high displeasure with thy self for having been such a fool, and a fearful apprehension of those dangerous rocks and shelves, upon which thou mightst have split thy everlasting hopes, had not God been the more gracious to thee in lengthning thy life, and giving thee further time.

And how will this oblige thy heart in gratitude to God, for not taking the advantage against thee, as he might have done, and in debt thee to him? which gratitude thou canst not better shew, than in a perfect hatred of his and thy enemy, which before kept thee and him at that distance.

I said, to *wean* the affections; because 'tis hard for a man to leave off at once what he is once wonted to, though he may be sufficiently convinced of its hurtfulness. And if this *conviction* and *hatred* of sin be in earnest, then follows

3. *Shunning all occasions*. A man then will set a guard upon himself, stop all the avenues of sin, and resist the Devil, who is likely most busie at mens conversion. He that is truly convinc'd will do so; else he but dissembles with God, and his own Soul.

For to pretend himself *convinc'd*, and *resolv'd*; to be *sorry* for sin past, and to *hate* it for the future; and yet to yield to it upon all occasions offer'd; nay more to court temptation, and play with Hell flames, which are so frightful, is desperate folly, and to act contrary even to the common sense of brute Beasts themselves, who with the greatest care avoid all places and instances, where they have had experience of danger.

4. At least, since he finds it so very hard to master his thoughts, and the *force* of evil Concupiscence is ever working and boiling up in unlawful desires; yet he will *bridle himself from* committing the *gross act*.

For if after his *conversion* he come so far back, as to act the same *wickedness* over again, then he is to begin all his work anew, and his Repentance it self is to be repented of, as having not been sound and sincere.

This is a man's orderly way of *turning* from his wickedness, *relegere vestigia*, to make his retreat, to return clearly by the same way back as he went out of his way. For

1. The sinner is surprised into some single *act* of sin, by violence of passion or the like.

2. He is tempted on, and led along, by fresh *occasions* to further acts.

3. His *affections* are won, till his will it self makes the sin its choice.

4. And lastly, his very *judgment* is depraved, his *understanding* corrupted, and his *reason* prevail'd upon; that now he finds out excuses and arguments to maintain his wickedness; and this is the height of all, till at last he harden himself in his evil way.

\* E

But

But they say, he goes far that never turns. So then he must go directly backward, when he *turns from his wickedness*.

1. By convincing his *judgment*; inasmuch as there's no Conversion without Conviction.

2. By taking off his *affections*.

3. By shunning all *occasions*, and at least

4. By a resolute *forbearance* of ever committing it again. And this for the *first act* wherein repentance consists; that which is *Negative*.

2. *Secondly*, The other is *Positive*, to do that which is *lawful and right*. The one word I suppose may refer to the *law of nature*, the other to *laws positive*, whether *divine* or *human*. These later are not to be excluded out of repentance and amendment of life; since he that disobeyes the Civil Powers, disobeyes God, and in all things that are *lawful and right*, i. e. that are not directly contradictory to the express *Laws of God*, we are bound in Conscience to obey the Magistrate, as the Apostle discourseth it *Rom. 13*. To do this

1. He doth by degrees *inure himself* to the contrary *vertues*. Habits are acquir'd by single acts frequently repeated, and though difficult at first, yet by use and custome are made easie and familiar, till at last they become natural. 'Tis with *Vertues* as 'tis with *Arts*, they are gotten by practice and exercise. *Usus optimus dicendi magister*, (says the great Master of Oratory;) so *vivendi* too. Those things which we learn to do, we learn by doing.

*Ethicks* or *Morals* (as the *Philosopher* tells us) have their name from *ἦθος*, *Mos*, from assuetude. Manners are founded upon custom.

*Nemo repente*  
Et. Even in *wickedness* no man arrives presently at the top and perfection, or rather falls down to the bottom, but spends some time of probationership, e're he be advanced to the *chair of the Scorners*; and if so in a descent, where a man goes headlong, and 'tis easie tumbling; much more in the track of *virtue*, which lies up hill, there must be an orderly progression from one degree to another of goodness, *from strength to strength*, e're he come to appear before God in his holy hill of *Sion*.

Psal. 1. 1.

Psal. 84. 7.

This as to moral acts, as a *man*.

2. As a *Christian*; He frequents those *spiritual exercises* wherein grace is promised and improv'd; *prayer, meditation, reading, hearing, receiving, &c.* whereof *some* are to instruct him in his rule, and to give him directions; *others* to fetch in help and assistance: and he that thus seeks God in his own Ordinances and Methods, will be sure to find him.

But all these things to be done in a regular way; or else he may go from *Scylla* to *Charybdis*, from Debauchery or Oppression to Fanaticism and Faction, to Heresie and Schism. Especially he will have a true respect to the *Church*; for that's but *lawful and right*, that he may be blest out of *Sion*; and bringing an honest heart thither, he needs not doubt his success.

3. To be sure he keeps himself *employ'd*, that his sin may not find him at leisure; that idleness may give the evil one no advantage against him.

Matth. 4. 21.

Matth. 9. 9.

'Tis observ'd, our *Saviour* called his Disciples when they were about the works of their Calling; some mending their Nets, one sitting at the receipt of Customs, though none of the best employments, yet certainly with as much honesty, as diligence, discharged by St. *Matthew*.

'Tis



'Tis a great mercy to have to do. Some men ow their vices to their want of imploy. Even honest recreations may come under this head; for if moderately us'd, they also are things *lawful and right*.

II. The consequent of thus doing is, that *he shall save his soul alive*. He shall be accepted and rewarded as a righteous person, as 'tis *verse 21*. *He shall surely live, he shall not dye*. And *verse 22*. *All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness, that he hath done, he shall live*.

1. Then by turning thus from his wickedness, and doing that which is right, he shall be so accepted of God, that his sins shall never prejudice him, as to his eternal estate, whoever the person be, whatever his former life hath been.

'Tis said of *Cornelius*, that his Prayers and his Alms were accepted *Acts 10. 4* before his conversion to the Christian Faith. And this according to St. *Peter's* own observation at large upon the case, that *God is no respecter of persons; but in every Nation those that fear him, and work righteousness, are accepted of him*; and as St. *Paul* argues, that *those that sin without law, shall perish without law*; so on the contrary it may be also for rewards, as himself disputes in that very place concerning the *Gentiles*, who having not the law, yet do by nature the things contained in the law. *Acts 10. 34. 35*

But this concerns us not, but to upbraid our negligence, to whom as God has given larger means and advantages, so he expects from us larger returns and improvements. And this I may confidently affirm, which we may all justly dread to think on, that an honest *Heathen* will at the great day find more favour at Gods hand, then many a careless *Christian*, then any such shall.

2. His thus doing prepares and disposes him for God's grace, whereby he may be *enabled* to do more, till he work out his salvation; and God's grace will perfect that good work which has been begun in him. *Phil. 1. 6*

I say, that Repentance and amendment of life are necessary *preparatives* and *qualifications*, to capacitate us for grace. Where a heart is possess'd with *lust*, there can be no room for grace. The *seven Devils* were first to be cast out, before love for Christ could be introduced into *Mary Magdalens* soul. *Luke 8. 2*

And when a man has done this; sincerely purged himself of his evil habits and wicked customs, and seriously applies himself to good and vertuous actions; then is time for *Christ*, and his Spirit, and his Graces to enter. Thus the *forerunner*, who came to prepare his way, preached repentance. *Matth. 3. 2*

For it is not to be imagined, that *faith* and *grace* should be superinduc'd upon *immorality*; and 'tis a high presumption for any one to fancy himself in a salvable condition, whatever the grace of God may be towards him, whatever it may do *without him*, till he be really turn'd from his wickedness; for this further is a sure evidence of the grace of God *within him*, which is alway ready to attend a man in his honest and sincere indeavours, which is the *third* thing.

3. This reformation and amendment evidences a justifying and a saving *faith*, and shews a man to be, to the glory of God's grace, a truly pious man, and one who may fairly entertain very good assurances of happiness in the life to come.

For though by *Christ* alone, as the *meritorious* cause, and by *faith* alone, as the *instrumental* cause, we are justified and sav'd; yet that *faith* it self will do us no good, no, nor *Christ* himself stand us in any stead, unless it be accompanied with repentance from sin, and amendment of life.

I say, that a man, who pretends to believe in *Christ*, unless he *turn from his wickedness*, and do that which is *lawful and right*, he is likely to be little the better for a Saviour; nor can he challenge salvation upon the single account of such a *faith*. And this according to that caution, *Let every one that names the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.*

2 Tim. 2. 19.

Psal. 11. 5. as  
the LXX. and  
the Vulgar  
read.

Luke 13. 27.

For still, even under the Gospel-dispensation, that will prove a sad truth, that *He that loves iniquity, hates his own soul.* And our Saviour himself tells us, that that shall be the doom he will pass upon all carnal Professours, who bottom'd their everlasting hopes upon the meer presumption, and idle confidence of an empty relation to him; *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.* Thus let them be Professors, let them be Preachers of him too, (for such are they he there speaketh of) he censures them as arrant hypocritical pretenders to his acquaintance, and utter strangers to his Person, or to his Religion.

You see then, how necessary good works and a reform'd life are to salvation, that the sinner must *turn from his wickedness*, and do that which is *lawful and right*, if he means to *save his soul alive*, if he expect to be justified and finally saved.

For besides, what *Christ* himself has done or suffer'd for us, he did not so absolutely and irrespectively, as that we should have the benefit of it, be we what we will, or do we what we will. It was upon condition; for it was by way of Covenant: And all Covenants do imply conditions, to which the Parties on both sides are oblig'd. And there are three such on our part, *Repentance*, *Faith*, and *New obedience*; and whereas *faith* is of it self in its own nature more notional, it must practically exert it self in the other two; I say, it must evidence it self, ere it can justify the sinner, by his forsaking his sins, and applying himself to good works and righteous actions. Otherwise it will be so far from justifying a sinner, that it will not be able to justify it self.

And then, as to the assistances of *grace*, that when all's done, we must rely upon that, to inable us for the performance of our conditions, inasmuch as we cannot *repent* or *believe* or *obey*, till God give us hearts so to do, and powerfully incline our wills thereunto; 'tis true: but how? God's grace is freely offer'd to us upon Gospel-terms, and is never wanting to those that with humble and sincere hearts seek for it, and endeavour after it.

Math. 13. 12.

But if we do not accept of it when proffer'd, if we don't apply our selves to the means by which 'tis to be procur'd, if we do not make good use of it, when 'tis once obtain'd; we acquit God, and derive the whole blame of our miscarriage upon our selves. *For to him that hath, shall be given*; i. e. to him that maketh good use of what he hath: and what's the use to be made of grace? why to *turn from our wickedness*, and to *do that which is lawful and right*, to forsake our sins, and amend our lives; and *grace* it self, if it be not thus practically imploy'd, cannot save us; for we are told, it may be *turned into wantonness*.

Jude 4.

Eph. 2. 8.

By *grace*, says the Apostle, are ye sav'd, &c. *it is the gift of God*: but as God gives it, we are oblig'd to receive it, and by it we are sav'd; i. e. by the help of it we are to save our selves, to work out our own salvation;

vation; and he that doth thus, maketh this use of grace, to turn from his sins, and to follow good works, he shall save his soul alive.

I might from hence draw several Inferences of *vulgar mistakes* about this necessary work of Repentance; Let me but mention two.

1. As to the *first act*, to turn from his wickedness that he hath committed; Some think it enough to turn from some sins, and indulge themselves in others, or at least to turn off one sin, and take up another in its stead. But such must know, that they are still in captivity; they do but alter their prison.

Thou art no drunkard, or the like, as that poor *Publican*; but thou art a proud *Pharisee*, and under the demure pretences of a strict life, coverst a foul inside; and God will sooner justify that humble wretch, then he will thee, for all thy specious austerities of a hypocritical piety. Luke 18. 11.

See what is said in the one and twentieth verse, *If the wicked will turn from all his sins, and keep all my statutes.*

2. As to the *second act*, to do that which is lawful and right: There are those, who seem to resolve all religion into *hearing*; that they look on as the soul-saving Ordinance; for by that comes faith. Rom. 10. 17.

Be it so; but let not good works be thrown aside as unnecessary, as dangerous. For what says the Apostle? *Not the hearers, but the doers shall be justified.* Rom. 2. 13.

Now suppose we had a pile of *Sermons, Fathers, Councils, School-men* to help, would reach to Heaven, and we set on the top of it; how should we do at the day of Judgment, when this pile would be on fire? all the Sermons would burn down under us. So the Apostle, whether *Knowledge, Tongues, Prophecies*, all shall cease, and be done away; only *Charity* is to bear us company into the next world. 1 Cor. 13. 8.

Besides, might our Saviour ask us, what's become of my Sermon? have you practis'd that? Certainly had there been such a necessity of them, *S. John* would have set down more of them.

Well; but if *Sermons* have such an efficacy to save souls, it must needs go well with the *Preachers*. What says our Saviour to those who tell him, *We have preached in thy name, &c. Away from me, I know you not.* What will he say to *hearers*? Have you turn'd from your wickedness, and done that which is lawful? have you been meek and humble, righteous and charitable? This will be the Test. Matth. 7. 23.

III. We come now to the *third general part*, the *Possibility* of the duty as to its performance: For else all were to no purpose. *When a man turns from his wickedness, and does that which is right*, implies that a man can, if he will; and this we shall shew in the context first, and then make it out in some preliminary considerations. III.

In the context God himself appeals to their own Consciences, for the equity of his proceedings, *verse 25. Yet ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal; hear now, O house of Israel, is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?* and then in the 26<sup>th</sup> verse, and this 27<sup>th</sup>, states the case on both sides, as to the *righteous* and the *wicked*, that if the one turn away from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and dye in it; for his iniquity that he has done, he shall dye. And if the other turn from his wickedness, and do's that which is right, he shall save his soul alive.

And



And the like he says in the 33<sup>d</sup> Chapter, with this aggravation, that all the former righteousness of such an apostate righteous man *shall not be remember'd*, and that none of that penitent wicked man's sins that he hath committed *shall be mention'd unto him*. And therefore he tells them in downright terms, that *he will judge them every one according to his ways*, and thereupon he bids them *repent and turn themselves from all their transgressions*; so *iniquity shall not be their ruin*. What can be more equal? what more plain and just, then this way of God's procedure?

And then to back this plea, and to throw off all kind of imputation from himself, he calls upon them again with the greatest earnestness in the end of the Chapter, *to cast away their transgressions, to make them a new heart and a new spirit*, and expostulates with them their neglect if they do not; For, says he, *why will you dye, O house of Israel?* and withal assures them with an oath, as it is exprest in that other place; *As I live*, says the Lord God, *I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live*. Wherefore, says he, which is the sum of all, *Turn your selves and live ye*. What could be more pathetick, what more convictive, either of God's love, or the sinners duty?

The considerations, which are to make this out, are such as these.

1. *God has a kindness for all the souls of men*. He is a faithful Creator; *his mercy is over all his works*, and he hates nothing that he hath made.

This is the very notion which expresses the nature of God.

Other languages denominate him from his power and other attributes; ours takes his name from his goodness; *God, that is, good*.

This is the ground of all Religion, that there's mercy with him that he may befeared.

2. *There's no barr then, as on God's part, against any souls happiness*. We say, unfortunate persons were born under an ill Planet, but whatever force the Stars may have upon mens estates and successes, they have none upon their minds and wills. Here 'tis thy own will that writes thy Destiny; there's no fatality upon thee, but what thou bringest upon thy self.

'Tis true, in the 9<sup>th</sup> of the Romans, God is compared to a Potter; who out of the same lump makes *one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour*, i. e. when the vessel miscarries under his hand, as 'tis Jer. 18. 4. and so the Apostle himself using the same Metaphor, 2 Tim. 2. 20, 21. tells us indeed, that *in a great house there are some vessels to honour, and some to dishonour*, but withal, says he, *if a man purge himself, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Masters use, and prepared unto every good work*.

How absolute soever Election may be, which yet the Prophet seems not to favour, verse 24. *When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall dye*. This again, Chap. 33. verse 18. and that from the equality of God's way, that *he will judge every one according to his ways*, c. 33. 20. but be Election absolute, Reprobation certainly is not so. There's no irreverfible decree in our way, to exclude us, if we do not exclude our selves. Thy destruction is of thy self, *O Israel*. God made no man purposely to damn him. Death was one of man's own inventions, and will be the reward of his own evil actions.

Hof. 13. 9.  
Eccl. 7. 29,  
Rom. 6. 23.

3. God allows every one such a sufficiency of means, as will at least render him inexcusable. In the Parable of *Talents*, they had every one more or less. Even where the means are denied or withdrawn; 'tis out of mercy upon foresight of the abuse.

These are certain truths, that every man may do better then he do's, and may have more grace to do better, if he seek it.

This is the bottom of all Ministration, *Preaching*, *Sacraments*, and all other *Ordinances*, to make us better; nor can we complain of God, but of our selves, our own naughty hearts and wicked lives. Nothing is wanting to us, but our selves.

This will be the *condemnation* of every one, that he did not walk in John 3. 19. that light God afforded him, more or less, but chose darkness rather than light; and though convinc'd of sins, yet even against conviction went on.

If the advantages of the Gospel, the assistances of Grace, the influences of the Spirit, the admonitions of Conscience will not prevail with men, God will be justified when he judges, even in their condemnation. Psal. 51. 4.

4. God having thus furnish'd us with helps, and being ready further to inable us, expects and requires our own serious indeavours in the working out of our own salvation, nor can we look to be sav'd otherwise. Phil. 2. 12.

*Qui creavit te sine te, non salvabit te sine te*, says the Father. *Audentes fortuna juvat.*

Περὶ μαντοῦ ἡνδρον Ἀχαιοί. Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia, &c.

This passeth for *current doctrine* in all worldly affairs, that mens industry and diligence are the only arguments to build their assurance of success upon.

And this much more in spiritual and eternal concerns. A man is not to ly in a ditch, and think to get out only by crying *God help me*. The Carter in the Fable, when he called for *Hercules* his assistance, was bid to set his own shoulder first to the wheel. It is a Proverb, that *the world is made for the presumptuous*; which Christ seems to have consecrated to pious encouragement, when he tells us, *The kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.* Matth. 11. 12.

So that if men would take the same care of their souls, as they usually do of their bodies and estates, and manage their eternal interests at the same rate as they do their temporals; they might be with the same ease eternally happy, as they become in this world healthy or wealthy, and at less uncertainty and hazard too; the grace of God, upon whose assistance we depend here, being more even and constant in its applications and actings, then his providence is, into whose disposal the issue and event of all human counsels and indeavours resolves it self.

For the Wiseman observes, Eccl. 9. 11. that *the race is not alway to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happen to them all.*

Let a man lay his worldly designs with as much prudence as possible, and manage them with as good conduct; yet still he must run the venture for his success, and is liable all along to defeats and disappointments. But here 'tis not so; he that turns from his wickedness and do's that which is lawful and right, may assure himself, that his soul shall live.

And

And thus much to evince as the *obligation*, so the *possibility* of this duty of *Repentance* and *Conversion*, that as it ought to be in the sinners *will*, so 'tis partly in his *power*.

We shall now shew how far that *power* will lead him, by those orderly gradual *deductions*, as I even now laid before you; yet not so, as to trouble you with repetition of the same thing already said, but to apply it, in somewhat a different way, to our present purpose.

1. *A man may, if he will, forbear the gross act of sin.* I do not mean, that he can live without sin in the general: For what man liveth and sinneth not? Such are the surprizes of temptation, such the infirmities of nature, &c. but as to this or that particular act of such or such a sin, a man may restrain himself.

1 Kings 8. 46.

I mean as to *wilfull deliberate* acts of sin, where he has time to consider and debate, and is not surprized. For when a man has this leasure, 'tis a vain apology to excuse himself by *infirmity*, or to say, he was hurried by his *passion*, when he had his *reason* and his *conscience* to his aid; and 'tis his own fault, when he lets all his obligations be thus born down by his lust.

I say, there's no necessity lies upon a man to sin, but what he brings upon himself. God hath laid none; that's to make him the Author of sin. The Devil cannot; *Resist him, he'll fly*. 'Tis wickedness and folly to accuse Satan, to charge the Devil with our miscarriages.

James 4. 7.

How run our ordinary Indictments? *Such a Malefactor, not having the fear of God before his eyes, did thus and thus*; so it will be at the great *Affizes*. Men are not predestin'd to steal first, and then to be hang'd; to live and dye in a course of sin, and therefore to be damned; but they are by a righteous Judge sentenc'd to punishment for their voluntary impieties.

2. *A man may, if he will, shun the occasion of his sin*, and get out of the Devil's way, and keep guard at his weak place. What should hinder him? 'Tis the Devil's character to be the tempter. But some save the Devil that labour, envy him the honour of contriving their damnation, and turn their own tempters.

The *Turks* say that in time of Plague, or like danger, *Every ones fate is writ in his forehead*; but those that regard their health, will take heed of infection.

A vessel may run fowl in a dark night, and strike upon a secret, unseen rock; but if the Pilot have any the least care, he will beware places of known danger.

A man may then so steer his course, as not to come in harms way, or offer himself to certain hazard: For *he that loves danger, shall perish in it*, and he that tamely yields himself up to all occasions of sin, must not expect to escape guilt or punishment.

3. *A man may, if he will, by degrees draw off his affections, and estrange himself to his sin.* For after some forbearance of acts, and avoidance of occasions, (which is in a man's power, if any thing be) after this diswonting, the *affections* will in time, of themselves, return to that duty, which they owe to right *reason*, and will disengage themselves from their unlawful objects, and be taught to run in a right channel.

Thus was it with S. *Austin*, who had much ado to shake off the fondness of his lusts, but at last he put on a masculine resolution. *Eji-ciuunda hæc mollities animi*, says the Comedian.

By



By this means a man will be able to turn head to his sin, to rally his reason, and at last to give it a peremptory denial and defeat; which is the *fourth* thing.

4. *A man may, if he will, use his reason*; and he doth not deserve the name of man, that will not do that. He may so fortifie his understanding, and even natural conscience, (for we are now within the compass of *nature*) that he may at length arrive at a full perfect *resolution* against his sin.

For having conquered it in parties, in particular acts, baffled and evaded it in its approaches and attempts, and withdrawn in some measure his carnal affections, which sided with his enemy, and betray'd him upon every slight attack; having now recovered himself to the use of his reason, he is in a fair way to an absolute conquest; and this even upon such *arguments*, as nature herself and common morality suggests; such as are the indignity and turpitude of sin, the shame and disparagement of it, the damage and loss, and the no satisfaction that comes by it, and the great hazards it subjects us to, besides the sad upshot, when a reckoning shall be called for, which even *natural conscience* apprehends.

And this is in a man's power, as to his *turning from wickedness*, according to that method, by which any sin assails a man, besets him, gains him, and gets the absolute mastery of him.

Then as to do that which is *lawful and right*,

1. *He may, if he will, keep himself well employ'd*, and so not be at leisure for his sin. He may answer temptation, *Non vacat*. Good exercise is an expedient for health of *soul*, as well as *body*.

2. *He may, if he will, go to Church, to his Closet, read, hear, pray, meditate and frequent those religious duties*, wherein God has promised to bestow grace, and pious persons are wont to improve it.

3. *He may, if he will, inure himself by good acts*, as to the substance of them, to the *contrary virtues*. I still speak of *moral actions* performable by the strength of *nature*; so that yet we are not come within the *sphere of graces* activity.

Hitherto a man may go of himself, if he will; and certainly he is in a very hopeful condition that goes thus far. I shall not fear to tell you, that he is gone a good part of his way to Heaven, and there's no going to Heaven but this way.

For when a man has forsaken his sin, so that he forbears acting it, shuns the occasions of it, alienates his desires from it, and strengthens his reason, that now he's resolv'd against it; when he's careful to keep himself well employ'd, to attend God's Church and Ordinances, and acquaints himself with virtue, and accustoms himself to good works; what do's this man want, if we may believe our Prophet, to make him a pious and a blessed person? He has *turn'd from his wickedness*, and now *do's that which is lawful and right*; therefore *he shall save his soul alive*.

And how's that? That's on God's part; for though we must *work out our salvation*, yet *by grace we are saved still*: 'tis the gift of God, when all's done.

On God's part then, who will not be wanting to his Creatures endeavours after happiness,

1. *God accepts such an one*; as we heard before, he did the devout *Centurion*.

\* F

2. *God*

Acts 10.

2. God further enables him; so as with his grace to prevent him and assist him, as again in *Cornelius* his case. He sent *Peter* to him to instruct him in the faith of *Christ*, and to baptize him into that faith, and accompanied the Ordinance with his Spirit; which wrought in him such improvements of knowledge and piety, that at length he was made Bishop of *Cæsarea*.

3. God justifies him; (his sins that he had done shall be mention'd no more,) and will finally reward him; His soul shall live.

To all this will be objected; that this seems to be an unsound Scheme of Doctrine, which brings in *grace* at the sag-end, and sets the Garland upon good works, and human indeavours, and favours much of merit and freewill. This we have spoke to in part already.

I intend not to enter the Lists of a formal Dispute, and to answer all Objections that may be made; for that were endless. As in *naturals*, motion and composition of bodies; so in *morals*, the ἀνεξέσιον or freedom of the will, what's in a man's own power, is a tedious, intricate Controversie. Yet this is sure (as the *Cynick* confuted *Zeno* discouraging against motion, by leaping about the room) that in such instances, as I have named to you, the will of man is mistress of her actions.

Let us briefly discuss one or two places of Scripture, whereon they mainly ground their Objections.

*Eph. 2. 1.* 'tis said, that we are dead in trespasses and sins; so that, say they, there's no life, no motion, till God put into the soul a new principle of life.

I answer first, that the Apostle speaks this of the *Ephesians*, in their heathen state, before they had received the Gospel, before they had been baptized into the Christian Faith.

2. That at most 'tis but a Metaphor, and 'tis a known Rule, *Omne simile est etiam dissimile*. The case then betwixt natural and spiritual death may be somewhat alike, but 'tis not altogether the same.

A man naturally dead cannot move or stir to help himself, or exercise any vital operation; but a man, though spiritually dead, is as to his natural powers alive, and may, as to meer moral acts, move himself.

3. This Metaphor, to be dead in sins, in the usual application of it, imports no more, then that a man is desperately engag'd in a course of sin, and under great unlikelyhoods of a recovery; but yet through God's grace, and his own working with it, may recover.

Hebr. 11. 12.

By the like figure 'tis said of *Abraham* and *Sarah*, before they had the Child of Promise, that they were as good as dead, that is, in probability of nature, one past getting, the other past bearing a child; and yet their natural powers were quickned, and he begat, and she conceived and bore a son, in their old age, as other Parents get Children in their strength.

Luke 15. 32.

In like manner of the *prodigal Son*, 'tis said that he was dead; that is, his friends had given him up for lost, and were past all hopes of him; and yet he did recover, he did return at last, when his necessities had driven him to his second thoughts, *I will go* (says he) *to my father*; and then his father as kindly meets him in the way, and heartily welcomes him home.

In the main it appears, that though the Apostle speak of a spiritual death, yet he do's not thereby intend, that a man in that case can do nothing upon a natural account, or of a moral concern, to help himself towards

wards his recovery. And that's the thing all along I have been talking to.

And how far these *moral actions*, I mean those instances of repentance and amendment of life, which I have mention'd, and shewn to be in a finners own power, may advance him in his way towards Heaven, I have already discoursed by proving, that as on the one hand they virtuate our faith, and evidence grace in us, when once obtain'd, *after a man's Conversion*; so on the other hand, they qualifie us for the obtaining of grace, and are the fore-runners of a true justifying faith *before Conversion*.

Another place, upon which great stress is laid, is *Phil. 2. 13.* That *God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure*: whence they conclude, that all's done by him, and that there's nothing in a man's own power, as to his will or his actions.

To this I answer, 1. That if we mind the coherence, the meaning is quite contrary to what they would have it. He had said in the *verse* before, *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling*; and here he brings a reason of his Exhortation, *for 'tis God that worketh in us both to will and to do*. If his meaning had been what they say, the inference would have been more *Logical*, thus; As to your salvation, don't trouble your selves; 'tis not your own will or your works will help you; for 'tis God that do's all.

2. Let us consider, how God *works in us to will and to do*. He works in us, and by us so, as that we work too; for 'tis we that do *will*, and we that do *work*. That is, he inables us by his grace, which is never wanting to those that seek it, to will and to work. And we must work with him, and make use of that grace he affords us.

The Apostle therefore takes it for an argument for our working out our salvation, because God is so ready to assist us, that we may not pretend infirmities of nature, and shift off our duty by reason of its difficulty; since God by his grace will be our helper, who as we have said before, accepts of our sincere, however weak, performances; and he is ready to *assist* them with his *grace* here, and will be sure to *reward* them with *glory* hereafter.

How the *will* of man closes with the *grace* of God, so as to imbrace it, and cooperate along with it; what the *Prepondium* or *Byass* is, that powerfully inclines it and works it over, is a nice and curious point, which I have not now time for. And indeed in such cases 'tis infinitely better, and much more satisfactory to *experiment*, then to *dispute*.

I shall conclude with two or three *Cautions*, which may quicken us, that we do not put off this necessary work upon this presumption, that 'tis in our *power* to repent when we will.

1. That *the longer 'tis deferr'd, the more difficult it will be*. Our sins will grow stronger, our powers and resolutions weaker, and the grace and favour of God less easie to be obtain'd, if we neglect the time when he may be found.

2. That *though true repentance be never too late, yet late repentance is seldom true*. 'Tis a shrew'd sign of our insincerity, when we are unwilling to leave our lusts, till they leave us.

3. That *our intentions, though never so good, if we deferr to put them in execution, when we have time to do it, will not find so gracious an acceptance at God's hands*.

4. That *every one has a day of grace*, and 'tis a thing of extream danger



danger to hazard the loss of that ; to let the measure of our iniquities be filled up, and so to have the things of our peace at last hid from our eyes, and repentance it self put out of our power.

May God, by the convictions of his *Spirit*, press home to all our hearts the obligations of this *duty*, that we may speedily and sincerely apply our *wills*, and exert our *powers* to the performance of it; that so God may enable and strengthen us by his *grace*, that *turning from our wickedness*, and *doing the things which are lawful and right*, we may have our sins forgiven, our persons justified, our services accepted, and *save our souls alive*, through the merits of his Son, our Saviour *Jesus Christ*. Amen.

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## Of the Duty of Confession.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* before the  
Family, *March 14. 167<sup>4</sup><sub>5</sub>*.

Pfalm LI. iii.

*I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever  
before me.*



**T**HIS *Pfalm*, you know, as the Title informs us, was composed by *David*, upon account of *Nathan* the Prophet's coming to him, and convincing him of those notorious offences and scandalous transgressions he had committed in the matter of *Uriah*: for which being truly humbled and brought to a due sense of that Provocation wherewith he had provoked God to anger against him, of that great Scandal and ill report he had brought upon Religion, besides the manifest Injury he had done to a Subject, his poor Neighbour; he breaths out his complaint, and declares his penitence in this *Pfalm*, which therefore he appointed for publick use, as a solemn form for such occasions, and to that end delivered it to the chief Musician, to be used among the Church-devotions.

His Adultery is mention'd in the Inscription; *after he had gone into Bathshebah*, 'tis there said: and his Murder of the Husband is expressly lamented in the 14<sup>th</sup> verse, *Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God*: which makes out, that the blood of innocent *Uriah*, which had been spilt by his order and contrivance, lay heavy upon his Conscience.

Wherefore having by *Nathan's* address been convinced of his sin, with bended knees, and broken heart he supplicates to Almighty God his most merciful Father for forgiveness. *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions: wash me thoroughly from my iniquities, and cleanse me from my sin*; verse 1. and 2. Why? upon what ground do's he put up these earnest Petitions? It follows, *For I acknowledge my transgressions, &c.*

He knew that *Confession* was the surest and the only way of obtaining mercy. *He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper; but whose confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy*; says the Wiseman his Son, *Prov.* 28. 13.

I shall not spend longer time in a general Descant upon the *Pfalm*, or upon the connexion of this verse with the foregoing, or following verses: but immediately apply my self to the *Explication* first of the words, and then draw forth two or three *Observations*, which may be of practical

cal use to us; and in the last place set it home, as I may, to our own particular conditions.

I. *First* then for the meaning of the Words, we may take notice, that the style and language of the Psalms is generally so order'd, that the later part of the verse doth usually answer the former; yet so as not directly to say the same thing, but to improve it at least with some height and gradation of sense; with some advantage also of phrase and expression.

Thus to acknowledge ones transgression, and to have ones sin ever before him, will much-what tend to the same importance and signification, yet with some difference and improvement; so that by *sin* here particularly mention'd in the later part of the verse, is not to be understood the self same thing as by *transgression* in the former; nor is the acknowledgment of a thing altogether so much, as the having it ever before one.

As to the Object then, or thing confessed; that's express'd under two notions; of *transgression* and *sin*.

As to the Act, that is likewise twofold: to acknowledge the one, and to have the other ever before him.

1. *First* then for the Object, or thing confess'd; the words may be capable of a double sense; thus.

By *transgressions* may be meant all those we call Actual sins, whether in thought, word, or deed; all the miscarriages of our lives; all the violations and breaches of Laws divine or human. For *where there's no law*, says the Apostle, *there's no transgression*; implying that transgression do's presuppose a law: the word properly signifying the going beside, or beyond that rule which is set for us to walk by.

And in opposition to these, by *sin* then must be understood that which we call Original sin; natural pravity, the corruption and pollution of our nature; as plainly appears in the 5<sup>th</sup> verse. *Behold*, says he, *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*. That sin, which stains our birth and defiles our conception, even before we come into the world, or can act any thing; and influences all our evil actions after, as being the source of sin within us.

Again, possibly by *transgressions* he might mean the ordinary slips of life, proceeding from the infirmity of nature, or the surprize of passion: such offences, as the best and wariest of men are not free from, and perhaps cannot with all their care totally avoid: such as those, of which he speaks *Psal. 19. Lord, who knows how oft he offendeth?* and he calls there *secret sins*; such as escape even our own knowledge, as not committed by us wittingly and willingly.

And then consequently by *sin* we are to understand, that which he there calls *presumptuous sin*, that which is committed with a high hand, deliberately, and with the full consent of the will; which is the highest aggravation of sin, and makes it become exceeding sinful. For though all whatever *transgressions* may strictly be called *sins*, yet this is by way of eminence so called, as that which lays a deep guilt upon Conscience: such as *David's* murder and adultery here were, and therefore express'd in the singular, *my sin*.

2. *Secondly* for the Act: To acknowledge our transgression; there's Confession: and to have our sin ever before us; there's Conviction and Contrition. Let me enlarge my self a little, that I may be understood by



by the meanest among you; this being a business wherein every soul is, or ought to be concern'd.

To acknowledge our transgressions, I say, is to confess our sins; to call them to mind, to bring them back to our remembrance what we can; to own them with shame, and to declare them with sorrow; to reckon them up one by one, to give in a particular account of them, as far as our memory will serve, and to spread them before the Lord, as *Hezekiah* did *Rabshakeh's* Letter, and in an humble sense of our own vileness to implore his goodness, that he would multiply his mercies over us, as we have multiplied our transgressions against him, in the free and full forgiveness of them all.

And to have our sin ever before us, is throughly to be convinced of it; to be continually troubled in mind about it, to be truly humbled under the sense of it, and to be possess'd with those dreads and terrors of Conscience which may never let us rest or enjoy any quiet within our own breast, till we have reconciled our selves to a gracious God for it.

O how happy should we be, how sure of our pardon, could we thus say as *David* here doth, *I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me!*

II. From the words thus explain'd, we may gather these Propositions or practical Conclusions. II.

1. That the Acknowledgment of transgressions, or the Confession of sin is a necessary duty of Religion. That every man is bound, to the utmost of his remembrance, to call to mind the errors and failings of his life, and to make an humble and open Confession of them to Almighty God, to the end he may obtain forgiveness of them at his hand. And thus, after the reading of one or more of these sentences in the beginning of our publick prayers, the Church herself bespeaks us; *Dearly beloved, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places, to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness.*

2. That though our actual sins are, as much as may be, in a particular enumeration to be confess'd and acknowledged upon all occasions; yet original sin, which is the beldam sin, and that from whence all our other transgressions flow and issue, deserves a constant and a continual repentance, as long as we remain in our mortality: that we ever have it before us, to bewail it, and by God's grace to restrain it, and to mortifie it, though we can never in this life perfectly extinguish it.

3. That though all our sins and transgressions are to be acknowledged, yet wilful and deliberate sins, wherein we have highly provoked God, wounded and wasted our own Conscience, scandalized our Brethren, and offended the Church, do require a more particular, severe, and lasting course of repentance; that upon a thorough-conviction, and a due humiliation for them, we may at the last find mercy with God, and recover our former state of grace and favour with him, and his Church, which we had justly forfeited by such daring violations of known duty.

I. The necessity of this duty of Confession we shall endeavour to make out by several Arguments, such as are these. I.

1. That Confession is a considerable part and branch of Prayer.

2. 'Tis that, by which God is mainly glorified.

3. 'Tis that, by which our Pardon is ascertain'd.

And that in these regards.

As 'tis an evidence of true Conversion.

As 'tis a term and condition of the New Covenant.

And as 'tis a qualification of the Sacraments, which are the Seals of that Covenant.

1. *Confession is a considerable branch of Prayer.* Now Prayer has been acknowledged by all people, even Heathens themselves, a duty of absolute necessity; it being the immediate and most natural act of Religion, resulting from the acknowledgment of a Deity, and the sense of his glorious Attributes. Wherefore the Psalmist looks upon those, *that call not upon his name*, as arrant Atheists, who indeed do not own a God. For in all Ages, in all Countries, people prayed to their Gods, as appears in *Jonah's* story.

Psal. 53. 4.

Jon. 1. 5.

And that Confession makes up a considerable part of prayer, we find by several testimonies and instances of Scripture, and practise of holy persons; as *Dan. 9. 4. I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my Confession*: and verse 20. *While I was praying and confessing my sin, and the sin of my people Israel*: For indeed the whole Prayer, which is too of a good length, is little else but Confession. In like manner 'tis said of *Ezra, 10. 1. that he prayed and confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God*. Thus Solomon in that Prayer he used at the Consecration of the Temple, joyns them together, *that if in time of drought or distress of the enemy, the people should pray towards that place, and confess his Name; then he would hear in heaven, and forgive their sin, and send them rain and deliverance.* 1 Kings 8.

2. *God's glory is much advanced by our Confession.* Hence the most usual word to express the praising or glorifying of God *הודה* signifies properly to *confess* or *acknowledge*. For alas! what additions can all the most studied and elaborate *Encomiums* and *Panegyrics*, which our invention or human learning can devise, make to the greatness and infinite glory of the Divine Majesty? He is most exalted in our abasements, and then are his Wisdom, and Goodness, and Holiness, and other his Attributes set forth to most advantage, when we humbly acknowledge our own Vileness and Wretchedness, and that which is the cause of both, our Wickedness. For this reason it was, that *Joshua* useth this expression to *Achan*: *My son*, says he, *give glory to the Lord, and make confession unto him*. Whereupon he makes a full discovery of his theft, saying, *I have sinned against the Lord, and thus and thus have I done*. For though the Wiseman tells us, *Prov. 25. 2. it be the glory of God to conceal a thing*, i. e. as to the secret management of his own purposes; yet from the later part of the verse we may argue, that if it be *the honour of Kings to search out a matter*, 'tis much more an honour belonging to God's wisdom.

Josh. 7. 19, 20.

Further, Our Confessions give him the glory of his Truth. He is the God of truth, as the Devil is the Father of lies: wherefore 'tis a common form of speech, *Confess, and shame the Devil*. Of his Justice also in bringing to light close secret villanies, and hidden mischiefs; and of his Mercy to us in sparing and pardoning penitent sinners, who to his glory make Confession of their sins; which is the third Reason.

3. 'Tis our own interest, as well as God's glory, concerned in our Confession, *as that by which our pardon is procured*. And to evince this in the general, I shall not need any other passage then that of this Psalmist in the 32 Psalm, where having in the two first verses declared the blessed condition of such as have *their transgression forgiven, and their sin*

*sin covered*; i. e. as here, their many frailties, and their fowler offences graciously pardoned; he goes on to shew how that blessedness may be procured, even by a frank Confession of them.

And this first by way of contrary; that without such Confession no likelihood, no hope, at least no assurance of pardon; verse 3, 4. wherein he complains, that *when he kept silent*, i. e. before he address'd himself to God in confession, *his bones waxed old*, &c. he pined away, and languished under a dull discontent and stupid sense of his sin, and that *day and night he felt God's hand heavy upon him*; he lay under the insupportable burthen of God's wrath, and the severest lashes of a guilty Conscience, which scorch'd and dried him up like the parched ground with summer heat.

But then he goes on comfortably, verse 5. that immediately upon his sincere confession he found himself at ease, *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said I will confess my transgression unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. I said I will*, i. e. I resolv'd I would.

The readiest way for the cleansing and healing of a wound or ulcer, is to lay it open, to search it to the bottom; to apply corrosives to the dead flesh, and fetch out all the putrified matter; and so it is with a Conscience galled with sin, which by dissimulation and concealment may palliate a cure, but not effectually work it without confession.

And indeed this is fairly implied in the Text it self by that causal Particle, *For I acknowledge my transgression*; that without such acknowledgment there was little probability of being cleansed from his iniquity, or washed thoroughly from his sin, which he desires in the verse before the Text; little hope of having his transgression forgiven, or obtaining God's mercy. This in the general, but there are more particular probations.

1. As *Confession is an evidence of true Conversion*: and without this no assurance of pardon, till a man turn from the wickedness that he hath committed: For 'tis they, and they only who *confess and forsake their sins*, that shall have mercy; as we heard out of the *Proverbs*; so 'tis said *Acts 19. 18.* that those who were converted by *S. Paul's* ministry and miracles, they evidenced the truth of their Conversion, and the sincerity of their belief, that *they came and confessed and shewed their deeds*, told them all the course of their former lives led in heathenism; and those who had *practised curious Arts*, i. e. Magick and Sorcery, brought their books together, and burnt them openly; the price of which books was valued at 50000 pieces of silver, i. e. in our money, according to computation (taking every *denarius* or piece of silver to be a *shekel*, that is, half a Crown) 6250 pounds Sterling: which was a fair Confession, and such as serv'd for a demonstration that they were in good earnest converted to the Faith.

2. As 'tis a Condition of the New Covenant, no other course we can take to render us capable of God's mercy in Christ: So *S. John* tells us, *1 John 1. 9.* *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* When we repent us of our sins, and declare our penitence by a Confession of them, then, and not till then, we may challenge pardon upon Gospel-terms; then, and not else, we may appeal to God's faithfulness and justice, as he stands engaged by promise in that Covenant to justify and to sanctify us, to forgive the guilt, and to release us from the penalty of our sins; to cleanse



us from the filth, and to free us from the power and dominion of them. Otherwise those attributes of his, his truth and his righteousness, will oblige him to condemn us with our sins, and to punish us for them, and not to accept us in them, or forgive them to us without confession.

3. As 'tis a qualification which is to virtuate the Sacraments themselves, and make them effectual to us. Now the Sacraments are Seals of that Covenant, whereby it is confirm'd to us, and the benefits and advantages of it are derived and convey'd unto us, in the pardon of our sins, and God's gracious acceptance of us.

Thus it appears at the very first administration of Baptism by John the Baptist, that when the multitudes flocked together to him, 'tis said *they were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins*, Matth. 3. 6. they made an acknowledgment of their particular guilts and personal miscarriages, as if this Sacrament would not have been of any effect to them else: and hence 'tis called *the Baptism of Repentance for the remission of sins*. And hereupon it was a solemn question ask'd of those that came to be baptized; or if they were under age, of their Sureties who undertake for them, *Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his works?* &c. and the answer given, *I renounce them all*: a custom practised in the ancient Church, and still continued in ours. To which St. Peter seems to allude, 1 Pet. 3. 21. where he says, *that Baptism saves us, not as 'tis the putting away of the filth of the flesh*, an outward Ceremony of washing: how then? *as 'tis the answer of a good Conscience towards God*, the stipulation and return made to that and the other questions, the obligation and ingagement we enter into in that Sacrament by such a Confession.

And as it is in this, so is it in the other Sacrament, for which cause the Church hath appointed a solemn Confession for all the company of Communicants to joyn together in, before they come to the Holy Table.

And this we may find was also observed in the time of the old Law, Lev. 5. 5. where 'tis ordered that the guilty person is first to confess that he hath sinned in such a thing, before the Priest be to make his atonement; and then, verse 6. he is to bring his Trespas-offering unto the Lord for his sin which he hath sinned; so that the Sacrifice was not accepted without Confession first made. Now all their Sacrifices, we know, were but types of Christ's death. He then, who would be the better for his Saviour's Passion, that would have his sins taken away by that Sacrifice which was made upon the Cross, and is still represented in the blessed Sacrament, must first confess those sins.

And this not only in particular cases, and for single persons; but for the whole Nation of *Israel*, the High-Priest is ordered in the business of the Scape-goat, which was also an Emblem of Christ's bearing our sins, that he should lay both his hands upon the head of him, and confess over him all the iniquities of the Children of *Israel*, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the Goat, and then should send him away into the Wilderness, whither he was to bear upon him all their iniquities, Lev. 16. 21.

You see then that, not without very good reason, the Church has thought fit, not only to begin the Holy Communion, which is our Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, with a Confession of sins; but even the whole body of her Publick Devotions, which are the Christian daily Sacrifices of our Prayers and Praises, with an Exhortation to it, and the practice of it, in a form so general, as to comprehend all persons, all sins; yet  
not

not so particular as to reproach or expose any ; that being left to the particular piety of every person to remind himself of his own particular sins, whilst he do's with the whole Congregation, joyn in one common general Confession and Acknowledgment.

And so much of the *first Proposition*, drawn out of the former part of the verse, the necessity of acknowledgment and confession of sin.

II. We should now proceed to the *second* and *third*, concerning the sin of our nature, original corruption, and the sins of wilfulness and deliberation, which require partly a more severe and lasting course of Repentance ; partly a more constant and watchful guard upon them, that we *have them ever before us*, both to lament, and to avoid them ; but fearing I should be much prevented in time, should I enter into that discourse, I shall not now ingage your patience any longer, then by pitching upon some short *Remarks* conducive to practice, wherein these sins, as well as those others, will be equally concern'd ; and that both by way of *Direction* how to make these acknowledgments ; as also by way of *Resolution* in answer to a question or case of conscience, which doth naturally arise from what hath been said.

11.

I. This duty of *Confession* being so necessary, as being no less then prayer it self, an act of that natural worship we ow to God, that by which we bring glory to him, and to our selves assurance of pardon, and the comfort of his acceptance, and the advantage of his grace ; it will not be amiss to inquire, after what manner it may be performed, so as best to answer and make good those ends.

1.

1. Then let thy *Confession* of thy sins be *open*, and free, and plain, as thou canst make it, with a declaration of all the aggravating circumstances, without any disguise or extenuation ; because thou hast to do with a God, who sees the secrets and innermost retirements of thy heart.

*Be not deceived*, says the Apostle, *God is not mocked* ; implying that those who go about to mock God, will but deceive their own souls, and make that part of Religion, which is most acceptable to God, to become detestable, when they hide themselves from his sight, as the first Transgressors did in the Garden ; and as if they meant to delude his Omniscience, shelter themselves under their own hypocrisie, in an affair where it became them, and concern'd them too to be most frank and ingenuous.

Gal. 6. 3.

Gen. 3. 8.

I know there are some too free and open in one kind of confessing, that publickly own their faults indeed, but so as to avow them ; that glory in their shame, and perhaps boast sometimes of those sins they never committed ; but these are so far from being pious and penitent, that like those fools in the *Proverbs*, they make a mock or a sport of sin, play with Hell, and dare the Almighty to damn them.

Phil. 3. 19.

Prov. 14. 9.

Especially spare not thy self in thy beloved sins, thy *Agag* lusts, the fat ones of the herd, those that are most suitable to thy interest, and agreeable with thy humour ; least it fare with thee as it did with *Saul*, who devoted the refuse, and reserv'd the best to himself ; whom therefore, for his disobedience and false dealing, God rejected and forsook.

1 Sam. 15. 9.

2. Let it be *sincere*, and in good earnest ; such as may be accompanied with a hearty *sorrow* for God's displeasure, which thy sins have procured thee ; with a thorough *shame* for the turpitude of them, that they have made thee odious to God, and scandalous to good men ; with a perfect

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*hatred* of them, that they have made thee so unlike to thy God; and so like to his, and thy utter enemy, the Devil: and lastly, with an awful *fear*, in regard of those many judgments, and dangers they have exposed thee to in all thy concerns, both of this life and the next.

And improve and heighten these considerations upon those thy sins, which thou hast wilfully committed, as those that are of the deepest dy, and of the shrewdest consequence; and which will need thy own tears to wash out the stain of them, as well as thy Saviour's blood to deliver thee from the guilt and penalty due to them.

Let an holy zeal inflame all thy Passions to the highest animosity, and strengthen thy resolutions, in their greatest vigour, to an utter detestation of them; that having thrown them up by confession, thou maist never have more to do with them.

3. Let it be *humble*, in a prostrate adoration of God in all his gracious and glorious attributes and perfections; and in a due acknowledgment of thy own vileness and sinfulness, weakness and wickedness.

Psal. 73. 22.

Say unto him, with the Psalmist, Lord, thou knowest how simple and *foolish*, how like a brute beast I have behaved my self before thee.

Dan. 9. 8, 9.

Say with Daniel in his confession, O Lord, to me belongeth confusion of face, because I have sinned against thee: To the Lord my God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though I have rebelled against him.

And if thou thus humble thy self, thou shalt in due time be exalted, and if thou give him the glory in thy own abasements, thou shalt be made partaker of his glory: For to the humble he giveth grace; and that grace will lead them to glory.

Be sure at least, the more vile thou hast been in thy sins, to lay thy self the lower in thy confessions.

4. Let it be *constant* in the performance, and continually repeated: that day by day, every day thou take an account of thy actions; and as *Pythagoras* taught his Scholars, thou examine thy self before thou sleepest, what sins thou hast committed, what duties omitted, and beg pardon for them; and what thou hast done aright, bless God for it, and give him the praise of his grace, which inabled thee to any good work; and in humility look upon thy self as an unprofitable Servant.

Luke 17. 10.

And as for wilful transgressions which thou hast at any time committed, and vicious habits thou hast contracted by continuing in known sin, let thy humility bear proportion to thy offences, and set aside solemn times for this exercise, till thou hast gain'd assurance of thy pardon: and then wilt thou have some tolerable assurance of thy pardon, when thou findest, through God's grace, thou hast subdued thy sin; the removal of its power being the best evidence, that the *guilt* of it is taken away.

II.

II. The other thing that remains is the putting of a *Case*, that seeing Confession is so necessary a duty, and whereas God alone has power to forgive sins, whether or no a man be obliged to make his acknowledgment to any one, in any case, but to God alone, from whom he is to expect forgiveness?

1. *First* then, in some cases I do allow Confession may be made only to God; as in the ordinary slips and common faileurs of life, and in secret sins, which fall under the cognizance of none but God.

Those *ordinary failings* are such as none are exempted from, and such as indeed no care can prevent, but will happen sometimes to the best of men;



men; such as are sins of natural *infirmity*, of daily *incurſion* or sudden *ſurreption*, ſins of *weakneſs* or *ignorance*, which we commit beſides our knowledge, and without the full conſent of our will. And for theſe it may ſuffice to acknowledge them to God alone; nor is it neceſſary, or perhaps poſſible for any man (for who knows how oft he offends in theſe kinds?) to make a diſtinct and explicit enumeration and recital of all particulars: but it may be enough to preſent them in a general Confession, and to deſire God's pardon at large upon our general Repentance. And thus our Saviour has taught us to aſk forgiveness for our daily treſpaſſes, as we beg our daily bread at the hands of our Heavenly Father. In like manner the Church has in her publick Offices provided a general Confession of theſe to be ſaid by the people, and an Abſolution to be pronounced by the Prieſt. Pſal. 19. 12. Mat. 6. 11, 12.

*Secret ſins* are ſuch as have eſcaped the notice of the world, and none but God and our ſelves are privy to; and theſe, if there be no further concern in them, I think no man is obliged to make a publick declaration of, or to confeſs any further then to God alone, in whoſe ſight they were committed. Nay, perhaps a man is bound by the very ſenſe of nature, which ingages us to be as tender of reputation as of life, to keep them as cloſe as he can; I do not mean to play the hypocrite, and live in them; but to repent of them, and forſake them, without making a needleſs diſcovery; but as he has acted them in private, ſo in private to humble himſelf for them before him who ſeeth in private. But then ſuch a guilty perſon, though none ſaw him in his ſin but God, ought to provide himſelf, that if his iniquity ſhould find him out; and that a juſt God ſhould, to the glory of his juſtice, by ſome unexpected Providence, bring his ſin to light, and expoſe him to publick cenſure; he ſhould, I ſay be provided, in ſubmiſſion to Divine Juſtice, to accept his puniſhment, and make publick ſatisfaction, with an open confeſſion and repentance.

*Secondly*, there are other *Cases*, wherein 'tis not enough to make confeſſion to God alone: as in thoſe ſins wherein our Neighbour is injured, or the People of God ſcandalized, or a man's own Conſcience afflicted and troubled.

In the two former *Cases* 'tis neceſſary his acknowledgment ſhould be made to the injured party, and to thoſe whom he hath offended.

In the *latter* I will not ſay 'tis abſolutely neceſſary, but 'tis moſt expedient and ſafe to diſburden the troubles of mind to ſome Paſtor of the Church. So St. James 5. 16. *Confeſs your faults one to another*; that is, to the Elders and Miniſters of the Church, as it ſeems there limited, verſe 14. *Is any man ſick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him.* And here, verſe 16. *Confeſs your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.* Such Confession being an evidence of Repentance, and ſo a preparative for the Churches Abſolution.

*Sins of Injuſtice* then, wherein our Neighbour is injured in eſtate or good name, upon a common moral account, require an acknowledgment to be made to the perſons injured, if we expect God's forgiveness: For God forgives no man to a third perſons wrong: *Agree with thine adverſary, and then bring thy gift to the Altar*: As if he had ſaid, God will not be atoned, till thy Adverſary be firſt reconciled. Matth. 5. 25.

'Tis absurd and unreasonable to imagine, a man shall do wrong to his Neighbour, and then cry *peccavi* to God, and give him a parcel of fair words, and think all's well, without making him acknowledgment and satisfaction to whom he has done the wrong. 'Tis a sure old Rule that, *Non dimittitur peccatum nisi restituatur ablatum*. No forgiveness of the sin, without restitution and amends made for the trespass.

Can any rich unjust man think, upon a pretence of I know not what piety, to go to Heaven with the spoils and trophies of his injustice? If he means to go thither, he must make a full restitution for the wrongs he has done: and if the parties he has done the wrong to, be not living, or not to be met with, he must do it to the Church and the poor.

So God himself ordered it, *Lev. 6.* from the 2<sup>d</sup> verse to the 8<sup>th</sup>, that a man that hath taken any thing violently away, or gotten any thing deceitfully, or falsified his trust in a thing that was delivered him to keep, or withheld a thing lost which he found, he must restore it in the principal, and add, for recompence, a fifth part more, and give it to him to whom of right it belongeth, in the day of his Trespass-offering: and then the Priest is to make an atonement for him, and his trespass shall be forgiven him. But, says he, *Numb. 5. 8.* which is a parallel place, if the man (injured) have no kinsman to recompence the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the Lord, even to the Priest. Thus the Jews were obliged to do, and certainly Christians are rather obliged to more than less.

Again, *Sins of publick scandal* require a publick acknowledgment and reparation; at least so far, since the Discipline of the Church is in a manner lost, to make reparation for any gross enormities and publick misdemeanours, whereby we have offended the Church of God; by ordering our selves more strictly; and evidencing our repentance, and reformation, and amendment of life for the removal of that scandal.

I confess *scandal* is grown a word so mistaken, and some people are so tender, that they are offended, not only at indifferent and innocent actions in themselves, but even at those things, wherein we faithfully discharge our duties. And as to these, the fault is in those that take scandal, where there's none given.

But where there is a scandal given, acknowledgment must be made. So *David* here, though not accountable to any human Tribunal, (*To thee only have I sinned*, saith he) and had made satisfaction to the injured bed, by marrying the Relict, and instating her Son into the succession; yet thought himself obliged also, for the publickness of his offence, to declare his repentance to the Church, and to do, as it were, publick penance in this penitential Psalm.

Lastly, *Sins that trouble the Conscience*, are to be made confession of to the Priest, to receive the Churches Absolution.

I do not here plead for *Auricular Confession*; I detest the common practise of it, as knowing 'tis too oft abus'd to villanous purposes, to debauch and betray people; but I speak of it as a method prescribed by Christ, for quiet and ease of Conscience; as it was by God himself before, in *Levitical* Ministrations.

Now whether *Confession* be necessary, draws another question, whether *Absolution* be? 'Tis in this case, as it is with Physick; the *Physician* cannot of himself cure Diseases, restore health, and prolong life, since  
God

God alone is the Author of life, and our times are in his hand, and he sets the measure of our days; yet the Physician is an Instrument under God to do that; and he that neglects him, for ought he knows, may shorten his days, and be accessory to his own death.

So here; The Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins, and he gave authority to the Church, *whose sins ye remit, they are remitted.* This is the *power of the Keys*, and signifies something sure, being delivered in so solemn a manner.

Let ignorant careless people think as slightly as they will; Let bold profane people say what they please; it was not for nothing; be it but declarative, 'tis some satisfaction.

The Church advises it before the *Sacrament*, which is a searching time; orders it on the *Sick-bed*, where the Priest, with full authority, says to his sick Penitent, *I do absolve thee.*

Certainly, to all that are truly pious, it must be matter of comfort, to have their Consciences disburden'd, and their pardons seal'd before their departure hence; which pardon of the Church, if their repentance be sincere, is certain and of force; and which pardon, if neglected here, may for ought they know, put a stop to their pardon hereafter for their wilful contempt of Christ's authority. For *he that despiseth you*, says Luk. 10. 16. he, speaking of his Ministers, *despiseth me*, &c. and good reason, for they Joh. 20. 21. act by the same Authority, For says he, *As the Father sent me, so send I you.* Now to God the Father, &c.

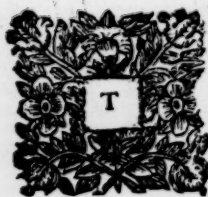


## Of the Efficacy of Prayer.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* in the Lent-  
Course, *March 12. 167 $\frac{2}{3}$ .*

S<sup>t</sup> Matth. VII. vii.

*Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*



HERE is no question, but our blessed *Saviour*, whose custom it was to recommend the Mysteries of his Doctrine to the people in familiar Instances and vulgar Expressions, took up this, as many other his sayings, out of the ordinary form and manner of speech; *this* and the *next Verse* being *proverbial sentences* borrow'd from the use of Common life; such as all Languages afford us many; such as in ours, *He that means to speed, must not spare to speak*; and *The world is made for the presumptuous*, and the like.

This is that which the *Hebrew* Masters call *דרך עולם* *Derek olam*, the Way and Practice of the World, accommodated to spiritual purposes: which *Christ* so did, not as to justify those worldly Practices; but from them to convince even natural Reason (by seeing what was done among men) into an acknowledgment of supernatural Truths and Duties.

Thus lies the *Argument*. If the Blessings of this life, *Favour* and *Preferment*, *Honour* and *Wealth*, *Estate* and *Interest*, things which ly much in the hand and disposal of Chance too, yet are not to be attain'd without *asking*, *seeking*, and *knocking*: if these *outward* things, which are indeed such, as do not either add any thing to a man's true Value, or contribute ought to his real Happiness, are by Worldly men so highly priz'd, as to be judged worthy of their most serious and constant Pains and Indeavours: how much more are *spiritual* and *eternal* Blessings, *Grace* and *Glory*, to be esteemed and laboured after by Christians? and if those things cannot be procured without such painful Methods, and may be obtained, and usually are with them; then neither ought we to doubt of the success of our Devotions, if with an holy Importunity we apply our selves to God, and persevere in our pious Addresses and unwearyed Attendances on him.

The Words are an earnest *Exhortation* to earnestness of *Prayer*; where

First,

First, the *Precept* or *Invitement* is express'd in three forms, *Ask, seek, knock*; to quicken our dulness.

And *secondly*, the *Promise* or *Incouragement*, viz the Assurance of obtaining, which is the main ground of Prayer, is delivered in as many forms, to take off our distrust, *it shall be given you, ye shall find, it shall be opened unto you.*

This threefold Gradation of the same sense, according to Scripture-use repeated in other words, and heightned, we may, to go up the Scale orderly, diversifie these three ways.

1. In regard of the *Act* or *Duty* it self.

*Petite orando.*

*Querite meditando.*

*Pulsate operando.*

*Ask* with instant Prayer. *Seek* with pious Meditations and holy Resolutions. Thus the Psalmist, *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart be always acceptable in thy sight.* The words of the mouth are but lip-labour, a religious babble, without the meditations of the heart. And then *Knock* with good works. *Be fervent in spirit,* says the Apostle, but withal *not sloathful in business.* Psalm 19. 14.  
Rom. 12. 11.

2. In respect of the *Degree* and *Intensness* of the Act; or the *Manner* of performing the Duty.

*Petite ardentier.*

*Querite diligentier.*

*Pulsate perseveranter.*

*Ask* with an humble and ardent Devotion. *Seek* with an active Industry and careful Indeavour. And *Knock* with a resolute Importunity and holy Impatience of denial.

3. As to the *Object* of the Duty, the Thing it self that is to be desir'd and indeavour'd. That is not express'd in the *Text*, but we meet with it in the 11<sup>th</sup> verse, in a general term; *Good things.* *How much more shall your Father, which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask him?* which S. Luke in his 11<sup>th</sup> Chapter has restrain'd to a particular sort of blessings; *How much more,* says he, *shall your Heavenly Father give the holy Spirit,* (or as the old Latin Copies read it, *the good Spirit*) *to them that ask him?* i.e. the gracious Assistances and comfortable Assurances of his good Spirit: and these *spiritual blessings* are certainly *good things*, and cannot be made otherwise; whereas *temporal favours* may be abused.

We shall therefore so treat of these *good things*, as in the first place, and especially according to Christ's own prescription, *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof,* to look after *spirituals*; yet not so as wholly to neglect *temporals*. For if we can put off all Earthly affections in prayer, and rise up to the meditation of our Spiritual life, other lesser Concerns will follow of course, and all *These things*, says Christ, *shall be added unto you.* Matth. 6. 33.

And thus in this sense we may difference the terms.

*Petite id quo caretis.*

*Querite id quod perdidistis.*

*Pulsate unde exclusi estis.*

*Ask* that which naturally we all stand in need of, Pardon of our sins. *Seek* that which through disobedience we have forfeited and lost; Grace to assist us. And *Knock* for admittance, whence our Corruptions and ill deservings have shut us out, that we may be received into Glory.

Now that *grace*, by which we are *pardon'd* and *justified*, by which we are *sanctified*, and at last *glorified*, is the work of God's *good spirit*, which we are here in a peculiar manner obliged to ask and seek for, and to endeavour after.

And the *Return* of the Duty is alike threefold.

To have it *given* us upon our *asking*, implies *Gratuity* and *Kindness*, favour and acceptance.

To *find* it when we *seek* it, bespeaks somewhat of happy Chance and good Fortune, which answers our Care and Industry; that it is the Purchase of our labour, and that we earn it as a due and just Reward; to *Heb. 11. 6. that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

And to have it *open'd*, when we *knock*, denotes the effect and product of our Courage and continued attempts, and argues Victory and Prevalence in our resolved Undertakings, and well-grounded Confidences. And all these advantages, we are to expect, shall attend us in return of our persevering devotions.

Infinite *Incouragement* this, to begin, to go on, and to hold out in a course of piety; since no one that *asks* of God, that *seeks* his grace, that *knocks* at the gates of Heaven, shall go away unanswered, disappointed, or asham'd of his expectation; and that what was once said of one of the *Roman Cæsars*, and may be said of any gracious Sovereign, is much more true of the King of Kings, *Neminem unquam tristem dimisit*, No one ever came into his presence about any business that was sent away dissatisfied or discontented.

Having thus done with the *Explication*; we shall gather up the sense of the words into these three *Propositions*.

I. That God's *gifts and blessings*, all *good things*, but especially the *graces of his holy Spirit*, as *S. Luke* has here limited the expression, are *very well worth the Pains of asking, seeking and using our utmost Endeavours* and importunities about them.

II. That *those Gifts and Graces* are not likely to be obtain'd without *such Endeavours*.

III. That *most certainly we may obtain them, if with a true Piety and earnest Care we do seek and endeavour after them.*

- I. First then, *the Grace and Favour of God, especially his holy Spirit, is well worth our time and pains to acquire it.* That's the first thing in all Debates, when we propose to our selves any Design, *Cui bono?* to consider, whether the business we are taking in hand be worth the while; and according to the Importance of that, we order our Counsels, manage our Interests, and imploy all our Powers.

Now if Worldly and Carnal men do with such resolute Vigour and subtle Contrivance, and indefatigable Pains pursue those things, which are not only in themselves *empty* and *vain*, but are many times so far from being *satisfactory*, when they are had, that they prove *mischievous* to the purchasers.

If the *Ambitious* man, with restless desires, clamber up through many Difficulties to a Precipice, and to such a dangerous Station, that he knows not how, either with *safety* to continue in the height where he is, or with *honour* to retreat back to his former privacy.

If the *Covetous* runs through all Hazards and Turnmoils, parts with his Quiet, and pawns his Conscience to boot, to gain an unfortunate Estate, of which he has only the toil of getting, and his heirs to have the benefit



Benefit of injoying, or the Pleasure of spending.

If the *Voluptuous* engage his Fortunes and his Reputation, spend his Heart and his Flesh, venture Body and Soul in the mean pursuits and fond carelles of flashy and filthy Pleasures, that perish in the using, and leave nothing behind them but a sting of Conscience, and a sad Reckoning to come. Col. 2. 22.

If *These* that are led by *sense* do with such eagerness (which shews the high Value and great Passion they have for them) hunt after such sorry satisfactions, which natural Reason it self disclaims; and Scripture, the guide of inlightned reason, assures us tend to destruction; so as to hazard their All for them, and to run the Risk (besides their many *disquiets* here) of eternal *damnation* hereafter; so they may make themselves Masters of these inconsiderable and less durable Acquisits:

What are we *Christians* to do, who ought to live the life of *faith*, which presents us with nobler and richer Objects to settle our Affections on? what Opinions are we to entertain, what Estimations are we to make of those unconceivable *good things*, which God has in store for us? that interminate Bliss, those transcendent Joys, and those ineffable Glories? and with what strength and intention of Mind, with what zeal and resolution of Will, with what force and vigour of Soul, with what flagrancie of Affection are we to apply our selves, and all our faculties, to the seeking and attaining of God's *grace*, the conduct of his holy *Spirit*, which is by his *gracious* Assistance to lead us into these *glorious* Assurances? Hab. 2. 4.

To help us to make a right Estimate of this *grace* of God, let us consider it,

In its own *Excellence*;

In our *Advantage*.

These usually are the two *Tests* we bring all things to, when we are to make an appraisment; their intrinsic Value, and their Usefulness to us.

1. As to the *Excellence* of Grace: *Christ* tells us, we shall in the next life be *ἰσὺς ἄγγελοι* equal to the *Angels*, i. e. as to the Case there propos'd by the *Sadducees*, in respect of *eating*, and *drinking*, and *marrying*, &c. such natural actions, as tend to the preservation, either of our own Persons by food, or of our Kind by propagation, being then to cease and to be superseded: but his Apostle *Peter* goes further, when he tells us, that even in this life by *grace* we are made *θεῖας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως*, partakers of the *Divine nature*. Matth. 22. 30. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

And what can Nature prompt us to desire more, what did ever any Religion promise to men more, then to be made like unto God?

*This* our first Parent at first in his pride, through the seduction of the Tempter, design'd; but his disobedience, as he found, was the wrong and quite contrary way to it.

*This* has been all along the ambition of the very *Heathens* in their several superstitions to imitate their Gods; whom therefore, that they might with the fairer credit indulge their lusts, they entitl'd the Patrons of their Vices. But this was to abuse *themselves*, as well as their Gods, they pretended to worship.

O how much more happy are we, that have the right way set out to us, wherein we may come to God, and be as he is! For what is our God but all *gracious*? and if the Spirit of his *grace* be in us, we do then indeed, as S. *Peter* phrases it, partake of his nature.

Col. 2. 9. And *this*, as it bespeaks high *Privilege* and such an *Excellence*, as it had been too bold for mortal men to aspire to, had not God put us upon it, and contriv'd a way for it, and shown an undeniable proof and instance of it too, in the Humanity of his *Son*, in whom the fulness of the *Godhead dwelt bodily*; so it imports no less *Benefit* and *Advantage*, which is the other thing to be consider'd in the valuation of his *grace*.

2. That 'tis highly *Beneficial* and *Advantageous* to us, in perfecting our Nature, and consummating our Hopes; the one perform'd by the *assurances of grace*, the other by the *assurances of glory*.

Here's on one hand, the allsufficiency of Christ's *merit* to *justify*; on the other hand, the efficacy of his *Spirit* to *sanctify*, and lead us to *glory*.

Herein lies the marrow of all Gospel-mysteries. This is that, upon which all our *Services*, all our *Expectations* depend.

And to these things neither the *morality* of the *Heathens*, nor the *pedagogy* of the *Jews* could advance them.

For as to *nature*, some *Philosophers* themselves found out her defects, and complain'd of her inability; so that they fancied a *μετεμψόχουσα*, that the *Soul* had moulted her wings, and was for some miscarriage thrust into the *Body* as a *Work-house*, to do penance; that after some moral purgations she might recover her former perfection. They own'd their *malady*, but being destitute of supernatural light, could not find out either the *cause* or the *cure*.

Hebr. 10. 10. And for the *Law*, though that was a more elevated form of instruction, yet the *Apostle* affirms, *it could not make the comers thereunto perfect*. So that *nature* could not be perfected, nor *hope* ascertain'd, till *Christ* came; who brought *grace* and *truth* along with him; *grace* for our *assistance*, and *truth* for our *assurance*; *grace* to commend his truth, and *truth* to make good his *grace*.

John 1. 17.

To improve this Head of Meditation a little further yet; Let us suppose all the Accomplishments of *Nature*, all the Imbellishments of *Art*, all the Improvements of *Education*, all the Advantages of *Fortune* met together in some one person so unhappily, as not to be accompanied with *Grace*; what are we to expect shall be the Success at last, and the Come-off of this Brave Unsanctified Great person? When *History* presents us with several Examples of men in this kind, whose brisk *parts* and *policies* have, by strange providences, been wither'd and flagg'd, their noble *designs* and vast *preparations* been blasted and defeated, and dirt thrown upon all their *gallantries*; that they have seen their Honour laid in the dust, before *Themselves* have come thither, and surviv'd their own *glories*; to shew, how necessary *goodness* is to support *greatness*, and *virtue* to maintain the advantages of *power*.

Take those, that have stood at the top of human affairs. Not to touch at *Roman* story; look but into *Scripture*. Take one for all; *Solomon*, one whom God had signaliz'd with his favours; and by giving him *Wisdom*, to make a right use of them, had rendred him the most remarkable of all the Kings of the Earth, of all the Sons of men. Never any *King*, came neer him in his character, never any *Man*, but he who was

Matth. 12. 42.

God too, could say, *Behold, a greater then Solomon is here*. And yet see how all his *glories* were sullied, how he faded like the *lies of the field*, which our *Saviour* puts in comparison with him, when his

Matth. 6. 29.

his heart was turn'd away from God once, and he no longer follow'd the conduct of that holy Spirit, from whom he received his *wisdom*, but deserted even that which himself acknowledg'd, the very principle and beginning of it, *The fear of God*.

Prov. 9. 10.

And at last, though his own personal *merit*, and the *memory* of his Father *David*, inabled him to stand the shock of those popular discontents, which had been gathering in the time of his government; yet the storm fell heavily upon his Successour, and rent the best part of the Kingdom from his Family.

Nor are we to stop here. Judgment pursues him further. Some of the *Fathers* are so severe to him, as one that had at an extraordinary rate abused extraordinary favours, that they scarce allow him a place in Heaven.

But under correction of their more rigid censures, in this I must crave leave to dissent. For, as my Profession obliges me to hope well of all Mankind, and to believe that there's no man, however profligate his life may be, but he does when he talks with himself in the cool of the day, when the heat of his passions is over, resolve one time or other to repent, and forsake his evil course: So if I do well understand *Ecclesiastes* his last Book, (though I know some expressions of the *Preacher* may to unwary Readers seem to have a dubious meaning, and a shew of *Scepticism*; yet) it appears to me with fair evidence, that *Solomon* after his many trials of *vanity* and *vexation*, did truly repent him of them all.

Besides, it looks somewhat absurd for any one, that has not only *charity* to the souls of men, but *veneration* for the holy Scripture, to imagine that any person, whom the holy Ghost had imploy'd in that sacred Office, to be his *Penman*; one especially who has writ so copiously and so mysteriously as *Solomon* has done, should finally miscarry. Nor do I doubt, but if those many holy Composes, above a thousand *Songs* of his, which, together with his natural Discourses, to the great detriment of *piety* and *ingenuity* both were lost, might have been recovered; we should have seen amongst them more then seven *penitential* Meditations, his Father's number.

However, this Instance of *Solomon*, as it shews how little his *wisdom* stood him in stead, when it was not seconded with the auxiliary forces of *grace*; so it helps forward and confirms our next *proposition* too; that *Grace* is not to be had without asking. For had he, as he did at his first ascent into the Throne, begg'd the continuance of those supplies; no question but he might have been plentifully furnished: but when he left God, God left him; and forbearing to *ask* and *seek*, as he had done; God forbore to *give*, as he had done. And that's it we are now to speak to.

II. That without devout industrious applications we are not to expect God's favour and blessings.

II.

For as earthly Parents, though they understand their *Childrens* wants, and have by the very instincts of nature strange resentments for them, and an affectionate *sympathy* with all their ailings, are yet so strangely pleased and highly taken with the officious addresses of the *little ones*, that they interpret their desires to be the expressions of their *duties*, as well as of their *wants*; and answer them so, as at the same time to reward that *duty* by supplying the *want*.

And



And as *Princes*, though never so gracious and obliging in their inclinations and tempers, yet expect to be courted by prudent Addressees and dutiful Attendances; nor is any one to look for great matters at *Court*, that stands behind the door, and useth no means of making himself known by fair intimations of his Usefulness and good Affections.

And as *Friendship* it self, which is the most intimate conjunction of Minds, and the dearest appropriation of Interests, is slackned and lost, and has all its Intercourses obstructed, and its Freedoms estranged by a neglective Absence, or an obstinate Silence.

Thus is it with *God*, who stands in all these relations to us, our heavenly *Father*, our blessed *Sovereign*, and our greatest and best *Friend*.

His *Providence* indeed is, as the *Athenians* represented it in the picture of their Goddess *Minerva*, full of *dugs*, and full of *bowels* too: but then these *bowels of compassion* must be moved with the *meditations* of our *earnest hearts*; and those *breasts of consolation* drawn with the *words* of our *mouths*, and with prayers which come not out of fained lips.

For how can we expect that *God* should open his *hand* to *give*, or that his blessings should drop into our mouths, when we don't so much as open our *mouths* to *ask* them, or our *hearts* to *seek* them, or use our own *hands* to get them? how should we expect, that *God* should mind us, when we neither mind *him* nor *our selves*?

And what *friendship* can we look for from him, when we keep at distance, and withdraw our selves from his acquaintance, and resolve to be strangers to him? And what can we think of our selves, when we are thus either lazy and negligent, or sullen and proud, as if we cared not whether *God* bless us or no, or we scorn'd to be beholden to him for a blessing?

But they that are of such a wretched and reckless humour must know, they are not capable of any blessing, there being neither any *promise* in Scripture, nor scarce any *example* in Story, for a man to ground his confidence of success upon, without his prayers and indeavours.

So far is *God* from promising ought to those that neglect this duty, or from encouraging such impious and sluggish presumptions, that he has on the contrary denounced the severest threats, that he will pour out his fury and indignation upon those Families, those Nations, those Persons, that forget him, and do not call upon his name.

And further I dare averr, that if *God*, as he is *kind* and gracious even to the *unthankful*, do's at any time thus bestow good things; those favours he thus dispenses, though intended by him for kindnesses and blessings, being not the returns of *prayer*, and so not sanctified, are turn'd by accident into the greatest curses; when wicked men, whose corrupt hearts sow all that's bestow'd on them, and turn grace it self into wantonness, are but fatted by their outward prosperity for the day of slaughter, and make their mercies the *præludia* and preparatives of their destruction. As the same shine and warmth of the *Sun*, which improves the growth of living things, and brings them to a just maturity, serves only to wither and shrink such things as are dead, and by gradual decays to promote and consummate their putrefaction.

'Tis then so dangerous a *symptom* of mercy, so ominous ill-boding a *prognostick* of favour to carnal men in *temporal* things, when they receive them and not pray for them; that considering the ill consequences, which the unsanctified use of them may draw upon us, we are in a manner obliged to pray against them.

And

Luke 6. 35.

Jude 4.

Jer. 12. 3.

And as to *spiritual* graces, 'tis very improbable that they should be obtain'd without *asking* and *seeking*. For as to bring a live birth into the world, there must be struglings of the *Ghild*, as well as throws of the *Womb*; so in our *regeneration* we must cooperate with God's Spirit, when that good Spirit (as the Apostle expresses it) *helps our infirmities with unutterable groans*; meaning, that our most earnest prayers are to be accompanied with his aids and assistances. And where these *groans* are to be found once, there is the true sign of a *spiritual life* commencing, which leads us to the *third* Observation.

III. That God's graces and spiritual blessings may most assuredly be gain'd, if we will with devotion ask for them, with diligence seek them, and with constancy endeavour after them. This our Saviour here has given us demonstration of in the very *policy* and *practice* of the World, in the *economy* and dispensation of outward things, which are usually had upon those terms; For (saith he in the next verse) *he that asks shall receive, he that seeks shall find, and to him that knocks it shall be open'd*. God having, as the Poet observ'd, set these worldly commodities of *honour, wealth, estate and interest*, as marketable goods, to sale at the price of our *sweat*; insomuch that our very Bread is by a primitive sanction to be purchas'd no otherwise; which as it was a Curse for man's disobedience at first, so now to the pious man is converted into a Blessing; *Blessed is the man that walketh in the way of the Lord*, Psal. 128. How? *Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands; O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be*. For the pious man, according to *Pythagoras* his precept, to make his prayer effectual, adds *industry*; and to gain success to his industry, backs it with *prayer*.

These two must go hand in hand for the regular accomplishment of any *temporal* design, and are therefore much more requisite both for the attainment of *spiritual* advantages, which are things of so much a higher value and consideration, by how much the *Soul* of man is far more excellent than the *Body*, and the concerns of *eternity* infinitely to be preferred before *temporary* achievements.

And this upon a *double* account, that these, as they are the *appointed* Means, so they are *acceptable* ways of getting blessings at God's hands.

I. First, God hath so appointed, *Thou shalt call upon me, and I will deliver thee*. Prayer, as 'tis a high *privilege*, so 'tis the great *duty* we owe to God; comprehending in Scripture language all religious worship. So 'tis said of *Enos* his time, that in his days men began to call upon God, *i. e.* to joyn in the publick solemn worship of God. For what is *adoration* but praying to God? and what is *prayer* else but the acknowledging of God the Author of all good things we hope to receive, as *praise* is for those good things we have already received, which is therefore in sacred style called *תורה confession*?

*Prayer* at one end for blessings expected, and *Praise* at the other for blessings enjoy'd.

Thus the exercise mainly of the Church *Militant*; This the sole employment of the *Triumphant*; so that *Hosannas* and *Hallelujas* make up the whole Quire above and below.

That the constant devotion of the *Viatores*, who are yet *asking, seeking, and knocking*, that they may obtain; for so the Apostle, *not as though I had attained*: This of the *Comprehensores*, who have received what they *asked*, found what they *sought*, and been admitted upon their *knocking*; because they have obtain'd.

And, *O blessed God*, how great has thy favour been to the children of men, who, as if thou wert delighted with our conversation, hast made that the ordinary conveyance of thy blessings, which is it self an extraordinary unvaluable blessing? For were there nothing else in *prayer*, but the having communion and fellowship with thy self, nothing to be expected beside, as thou art pleas'd to derive all thy graces that way; one would think we should need no command, no other encouragement for the performance of this *duty*, but barely the duty it self.

But then, when we understand how necessary thou hast made it for our *interest*, that 'tis the Key which unlocks the treasures of Heaven, and sets open the bosom and bowels of the Almighty, that which at once *procures* and *sanctifies* all thy blessings to us; how can we, without the imputation of as great *folly* and unkindness to our selves, as of *impiety* to thee, neglect this sacred institution of thine, so *advantageous* to us, so *acceptable* to thee? That's the other.

2. God kindly accepts our addresses this way. 'Tis one of his most beloved Characters, *a God hearing prayer*.

'Tis very probable, that the Nurse-mother takes as much pleasure in having her breasts drawn, as the poor Infant does in drawing them; and 'tis no less certain, that God, who is made up all of parental affections, is as greatly delighted, as we are benefited, when by our pious applications we fetch blessings from him.

This do's not only by Scripture-promise ingage him on our side, but by a kind of natural insinuation and prevalence win him over to us, and lay obligations upon him to be ours.

By this exercise we do as it were try masteries with him, and of that yielding goodness he is, that he is well pleased, when like *Jacob*, having by apprehensions of faith got hold of him, we *wrestle* and strive with him in prayer, and with our importunities prevail.

*O gracious God*, who art of thy own nature *more ready to give than we are to ask*, and yet as if thou deniedst thy own nature to oblige us, dost so order and manage thy blessings, that they may appear to be rather the acquits and purchases of our prayers, then the products of a gratuitous kindness, and dost put on a seeming kind of unwillingness and reluctance on purpose to invite our more earnest importunity; that there may accrew the greater glories to our victorious faith, by submitting thy innate mercies to its conquests for trophies and matter of its triumphs; and dost so strangely in a maze of love oblige us, that all the while it looks as if we ow'd thy favours to our own indeavours, and were not at all oblig'd to thy goodness for them. This is the highest point and act of *friendship*, so to do courtesies as to quit the obligation of them, and to reckon them more then earnd when they are asked.

And this is perfectly God's temper, as his Apostle *James* informs us, that he *gives liberally, without upbraiding*. Indeed he takes care to cut off all occasion of upbraiding us, by making his blessings not so much the promised *rewards*, as the forced *prizes* of our prayers; with which he appears so much taken, as if he expected no thanks for what he do's in answer to them.

Infinite condescension! unspeakable obligingness! I want words to express the notion I have of it. For what can be more endearing tenderness then this, that a gracious Benefactor, to such indigent Creatures as we are, who cannot in *naturals* subsist without his *providence*, nor in *spirituals* act without his *grace* one minute of time; yet should lay



lay the obligation on our side, and for our very calling for his benefits, which in us is but serving our *necessity* as well as performing our *duty*, should repute us the *obligors*, himself the *obligee*?

So *acceptable*, I say, is our seeking to him, that he would not be thought to oblige us so much by his *giving*, as he seems to be obliged himself by our *asking*.

To all this, that has been said, will perhaps be *objected*; that a man cannot *ask* grace, or *seek* it without he have grace first. Wherefore till God please to give it, it is not only *vain*, but *impossible* to endeavour after it; since from him comes *to will and to do*.

Phil. 2. 13.

I shall not now stand to unravel that snarled *scheme of doctrines*, from whence this *Objection* may arise, but shall answer briefly and plainly; that a man has power of himself to apply to the means of grace, to forbear gross sins and the like; and he that with an honest sincere heart do's this, shall not fail of grace to enable him for further conduct.

I speak now within compass of all *parties*. There is none of the most *rigid*, will deny, but that *Every man may do better then he do's, if he will*; i. e. if God give him grace; and that *Every one may have more grace then he has, to do better, if he will seek it*: For otherwise all *exhortations, instructions, reproofs* would be useless methods, and all discourses of *virtue and piety* be arrant Nonsense.

And for any one to drive on the argument yet further and say; when all's done, *God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy*, and *Who can resist his will*? and to what purpose will it be for any one to labour, till God give him power; for *in the day of his power we shall be a willing people*; is still more unreasonable.

Exod. 33. 19.

Rom. 9. 19.

Psal. 110. 3.

For let me ask the man, that thus pretends to wait God's time and submit to his way. *Art thou willing to do, O Man, as thou sayest, to close with God at his time, in his way*? Come along then, if thou art in earnest, know that *Now is God's accepted time, now while 'tis called To day*; *To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*.

2 Cor. 6. 2.

Heb. 3. 13.

Psal. 95. 7.

Again, art thou willing to comply with him in his way? Be found in his way then. Do thou what thou canst, and he will help thee to do more. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you*.

James 4. 8.

But for a man to throw the whole business upon God's *absolute will*, and to do nothing himself towards the exerting his own will, is the highest absurdity as to *reason*, and the greatest affront to God's *grace* in the world.

Indeed, if God should bid us *ask*, and yet had resolv'd beforehand to deny us; if he commanded us to *seek* his grace, and yet had laid it out of our way; if he importun'd us to *knock*, and yet with an *irreversible decree* had barr'd the doors against us; if it be thus, I know not what the Gospel signifies, to what purpose the *Ministry* or any of the *Ordinances* serves.

Alas! there can be none of all this; nothing can be further from truth, then this dissimulation from the *nature and will* of God. No: *God will be justified when he judges*; and it will appear to the conviction of the whole world, when the books of mens *consciences and lives* shall be laid open, that God has not been wanting to the very worst of men, but that they have been wanting to themselves, and must at last acquit God, and take upon themselves the *guilt and shame* of their miscarriages.

Psal. 51. 4.

It may peradventure yet from several *Instances* be urged, that some have *asked* and *sought* and yet gone without. It must be granted that some may *ask and receive not*, because, as S. James tells us, *they ask amiss*; that others have fail'd of their *expectations*, by not holding on in their *devotions*; that God sometimes *denies* the thing that's *asked* and *sought* by his petitioner, and makes him ample amends by giving him something that is better for him; as in S. Paul's case: and that otherwhiles to try and exercise our faith he *delays* the answer, that *patience may have her perfect work*.

I must not leave this without a severe *remark*, that men may by fond and wilful delays of seeking God, whilst he may be found, bring themselves into a sad *premunire*, that they may seek him at last, when 'tis too late. 'Tis true; a *serious repentance cannot be too late*; but what can such presumptuous sinners, whom God has often courted in his *Word* and *Sacraments*, and has been denied; often sought by his *providence* and his *grace*, and as often been disappointed; often knock'd at their hearts with the motions of his blessed *Spirit*, and the checks of their own *Consciences*, and still refused admittance: what can such desperate wretches expect, but that, as they have made a mock of *wisdom*, and defeated all her *methods*, so when the terrors of *death*, the horrors of *conscience*, or any other great *calamity* seizes them, Wisdom should, in a just and necessary retaliation, when they cry, give them no answer, but laugh at them in their distress; that so through *their own* inexcusable neglect, with *Esau* they loose the blessing, though they *seek it with tears*; and with the *foolish Virgins*, for all their knocking, are shut of the Kingdom?

Wherefore, that upon our *asking*, *seeking*, and *knocking*, we may meet with our desired success, I shall close all with some brief *directions*, in what manner this *duty* is to be perform'd.

I. First then, *Ask from a right principle, and to a right end*. The principle from whence all our requests must flow, is *Faith*, a holy confidence in the goodness of God, and in his promises, that we may build our assurances of obtaining what we ask upon his gracious nature, and the good pleasure of his *will* declared in his word; since *every one that comes to him this way, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those that seek him*: and S. James says, that he that asks doubting must not look to receive ought at God's hands; for he is as *a wave of the sea*, a thing of no certainty, and that dasheth his own hopes.

Now this *faith* is to be grounded upon *Christ alone* our Mediator and our Advocate. Thus himself hath taught us; *whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you*.

We need not with the *Romanists* apply our selves to any other besides him, nor doth he want any *coadjutors* in his office. The *Angels* are of a distinct nature from *us* and from *him*, nor can their ministration do us any help in this matter; nor if it could, do we understand how to apply to them. I acknowledge they are *ministering spirits*; but that is, as they are *sent* by God they attend us, not as they are called upon by us, for which we have neither *precept* nor *example*. And as to the *Saints*, they are not only as little to be understood in their *separate state*, but as little understanding of ours; for *Abraham* is ignorant of us, *Isa.* 63. 16.

Where-

Wherefore since God hath pleas'd to invest his *only begotten* with our humanity, that we might by him have immediate access, and that *through the vail of his flesh we might enter into the Holy of Holies*; for us to address our selves to *Saints and Angels*, as 'tis usual in the Courts of earthly Princes, to make the Attendants of *Majesty* our friends, were not only a superstitious Complement to those *Blessed ones*, but an unworthy Affront also to the *Son of God*, whose great Place and Imploy it is now in Heaven to present our *Prayers* to God, perfum'd first with the Incense of his own Intercessions.

Eph. 2. 18.  
Heb. 10. 19, 20.

Again, we must ask to a *right end* and purpose, and set the aim and level of our hearts aright; and this must be according to the *Will* of God, which ought to be the rule of *prayer* as well as of *practice*. Our *Saviour* has provided us an excellent *platform*; and certainly if all our requests are accepted by being offer'd up in his *name*, they cannot be ere a whit the less welcome or prevalent for being presented in his *words*; and in general, as to *Set-forms*, which the *Church* according to that power *Christ* has given her, has in her *Offices* furnish'd us with, it is abundantly more *safe* to any, and much more *comfortable* to all, that are truly pious, to breathe out their desires in those wholsom *publick forms* of Devotion, then to trust to *extemporary effusions*, to the vain prattle and idle *tautologies* of those that pretend themselves *gifted*, who with horrible boldness impute the greatest absurdities to the influence and operation of the *Spirit*; whereas the *Spirit* loves to be accompanied with a regular *Understanding*. *I will pray with the Spirit*, says the Apostle, *and I will pray with the understanding also*: and that most assuredly may best be done in those *forms*, which we are already through *use* and *custom* well acquainted with, and in *judgment* and *conscience* no less satisfied in.

Math. 5. 7.

1 Cor. 14. 15.

Let me not be mistaken. This is not said to disparage or discourage *private devotions*, wherein men may according to the *sense* of their own *wants*, and the *experience* they have of God's *goodness*, freely in their own words *pour out their souls* before the searcher and understander of hearts, and find acceptance of their sincere desires, though delivered with much imperfection.

2. Secondly. That we may *seek*, as we should, both for *Matter* and *Manner*; *we must seek for things lawful, and seek for them by lawful and appointed means*. For if we get *advantages*, that are in themselves *Unjust*, or those that are *Just* by *unjust ways*, we cannot own our selves to have a true *right* to the things, as to the *possession* of them; nor are we to expect any *blessing* with them, in the *injoyment*. What can we fancy of a *Thief*, that pretends *devotion* and *industry* in the manage and pursuit of his wicked Calling? of a *Rebel*, *praying and fasting* for success against his Sovereign? The very *prayers* of such are *abomination*; no more acceptable to God, then the *cutting off a dogs neck* instead of sacrifice, or giving the *hire of a whore* for an oblation. Because in these Cases the very *designs* and *actions* themselves are unwarrantable.

Prov. 28. 19.

Isa. 66. 3.

Deut. 23. 18.

Then as the *thing*, we seek, must be good, so must the *means* be too, by which we seek it. *Law* is an honourable profession, and necessary for the preservation of *Society*, in the clearing of *rights* and *titles*; and the *Ministry* is a sacred Function, no less necessary for the salvation of mens *souls*, and making out their eternal *interests*. But and if the *Lawyer*, instead of settling peace, foment *strife*, and exhaust *estates*, whilst he



Phil. 1. 16. pretends to secure them; if a *Minister preach Christ out of contention*, and make the Gospel it self a plea for faction; this is not a fair nor justifiable way of discharging the purpose of their Employments, the *one* or the *other* in *Civil* or *Religious* affairs.

There hath been a generation of Men, that pretended much to this *seeking of God*; but it was in the way of *Schism*, to uphold a cause of *Rebellion*. I heartily pray, that those, who shall at any time in this manner *seek the Lord* against his *Anointed*, may in the same manner, as those have been, be finally defeated and lost in their expectations.

3. Lastly, *Knocking* implies *Importunity*; and that is made up of *resolution* and *perseverance*, *courage* and *constancy*; *courage* in the onset, and *constancy* in the holding out. Our Saviour tells us in a *military* term taken from the storming of Towns, that *the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force*. It must be *beleaguer'd* with our prayers, the Walls *scaled*, and the Gates *forced* open.

Nor is this to be an ill-behav'd unmannerly *rudeness*, by which we are to accost the Almighty, and attack his place of Residence; but a well-grounded regular *confidence*, having by the *Captain of our Salvation*, who first climbed the breach, gotten *access with boldness to the throne of grace*.

Especially if we add *constancy* to our *courage*; if we hold on to the end, and not give over *knocking* till we get admission. We read, our Saviour himself *knocked* thus *three times*, *praying* the same prayer *in the same words*, that *the Cup might pass from him*; but This he knew aforehand was to be denied him, being the great Design he came about; only the *infirmity* of our nature prompted him to make the request, and his *zeal* to continue it for thrice, and then he submitted: *Si ter pulsanti*, &c. though the Author to the *Hebrews* tell us too, that even then *he was heard, in what he fear'd*.

But for *spiritual blessings*, for *saving mercies*, we are never to give over, *manibus pedibusque*, to *knock* with hands and feet; *hands* lifted up in prayer, and *feet* order'd in a Christian conversation, and to *strive to enter in*; which those that knock otherwise are not likely to do: for in this case 'tis not God shuts them out, but they keep out themselves. A remiss heartless prayer is but *ἀνεμάχων ἔγχος*; *an arrow shot out of a slack bow*; and he that *faints* in his devotions, flags and gives out after good beginnings, is never likely to attain, unless a man will feed himself with an extravagant fancy, that he is got into *heaven*, before he comes to the gate, which S. Paul himself durst not be confident of; *Not as though I had already attained*, saith he of himself.

To draw to a *period*. As we propos'd *spiritual blessings* mainly to be prayed for, and sought after, so neither did we utterly exclude *temporal mercies*. Those principally and in the first place to be desired; these secondarily and in subordination. Those absolutely, with that earnestness as not to be denied; these with condition and submission to God's will, if he sees them fit for us.

For these common favours of God in our *secular* concerns (as *Christ* hath promised, they shall be given in over and above to those others; so they) may lawfully, and ought out of duty upon occasion to be made the subjects of our requests; nor will they otherwise prove real advantages to us, unless obtain'd and sanctified by *prayer*.

David

David acknowledges even these *externals*, and ascribes them to God's goodness, and gracious dealing with him, that it was God *taught his hands to war, and his fingers to fight*; and that he that had preserv'd him in his youth from the *Bear* and the *Lyon*, had given him *victory* over the defiance of *Goliath*, and *protection* from the menaces of *Saul*. Psal. 144. 1.  
1 Sam. 17. 37.

A sober Writer, that gives us some account of *Charles the Fifth*, as having some time accompanied him in his Wars, tells us, he was wont to fight his Battels over upon his Knees before he came to Handy strokes; and that he prevail'd with God first, and then had the better of his Enemies, and ow'd many deliverances to his devotions.

What shall we say, when even *Hypocrites* and wicked men have, by an outward semblance of devotion, suspended the execution of extraordinary judgments, and obtain'd the favour of common mercies? Though I must confess too, that it do's not always hold true, that a real piety meets with a present reward, or is crown'd with an outward success, (God having reserv'd better things for such.) But neither do such instances hinder, but that prayer is the usual way of deriving even these temporal blessings.

Nor can it be unseasonable for us to mingle these Concerns with the devotions of *Lent*; wherewith I shall conclude, and cannot but hope that you will all joyn with me.

*That God would assist us in our just quarrels with our Enemies, and unite us in our divisions amongst Our selves.*

*That he would direct our Counsels at home, and prosper our Forces abroad.*

*That he would bestow upon us all his Grace, that we may not by new provocations make him our Adversary.*

*And that he would inspirit our Souldiers and Sea-men with his Fear, which is the truest Courage, since he that fears God needs fear nothing else.*

*And yet that we may not trust to an Arm of flesh, or rely upon secular confidences; but remembering his manifold Deliverances and Preservations, we may solely depend upon his Aids, because there is none other that fighteth for us, but he alone.* Jer. 17. 5.

*That the KING'S Throne may be establish'd in Righteousness, and in the Affections of his People.*

*That his Enemies may be found lyars; and that those that wish him well may prosper.*

*That no Controversie, no Dispute may ever unhappily arise betwixt him and his People, but only this; Whether He by his obliging Condescensions should be the more Gracious Sovereign, or We by our dutiful Submissions the more Loyal Subjects.*

*That God would bless him in his Royal Person, in his Family, in his Government, in his Undertakings, in all his Concerns, with all manner of Blessings; and that he would make him a Blessing to Us, and to our Posterities, that After-ages may call him Blessed.*

*That as God has by a miraculous Providence reduc'd the revolted Tribes, our whole Israel, to their obedience again to the house of David; so he would also by his Grace, in his due time, bring them back to the service of the Temple; to the healing of our breaches, and the securing of our Peace: that so having our Minds united with the Unity*  
of

*of the Spirit and the Band of Peace, in the unanimous exercise of that Religion, which our pious and prudent Ancestours, when upon mature deliberation they Reformed from the Errours and Corruptions of the Romish Church, have left us; and in Testimony and Defence whereof our Royal Martyr, whose memory will be ever Blessed, did in the late times of Trouble lay down his Crown and his Life; we may at last be a settled People, both in Church and State.*

*May a gracious God, to the praise of his own Glory, to the Safety and Honour of the King, and to the Quiet and Welfare of these Nations, of his infinite Mercy to us, grant all this that we have desired of him. And may all the People say, Amen.*

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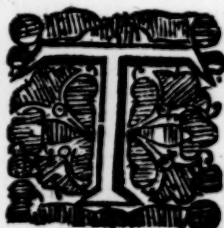
## Of God's Mercies and Forgivenesses.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* in the Lent-Course, *March 15. 167<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>*.

Dan. IX. ix. x.

*To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses ;  
though we have rebelled against him.*

*Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our  
God.*



HERE can be no so prevalent a Persuasive and Inducement to *Repentance*, no so powerful a Charm to win the hearts of sinners, and melt them down into a relenting Compliance with the Divine Will, as the serious consideration on the one hand of God's gracious dealings with us, and of our own ungracious returns on the other hand ; of his *mercies* and *forgivenesses*, and of our *rebellions* and *disobediences* ; which are both of them fairly and fully represented in the Words I have now read unto you.

Indeed the whole business of Religion is comprised in these two Heads ; the Knowledge of *God*, and that of *Our selves*. And how can we better come to the knowledge of *God*, then by studying those Attributes of his, which make up the perfection of his very Nature ? *Be ye merciful*, Luke 6. 36. *as your Father which is in heaven is merciful*, says one Evangelist : *Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*, says another ; as if he had Matth. 5. 48. no other perfection but his *mercy*. And again, what likelier way for us to arrive to the true knowledge and right understanding of *our selves*, then to contemplate the pravity and corruption of our Natures, and the provoking sinfulness of our Lives ? there being nothing else in us that we can truly and properly call our own.

These two things are those which will evidence the sincerity of our Worship and pious acknowledgments to the Majesty of Heaven, when at once we lay before us the transcendent glories of his Mercies, and the abominable vileness of our own sins ; which will be mainly the subject wherewith I shall endeavour for a while to entertain your present Meditations, with that plainness, as to take in all conditions, and all understandings. And may we all of us, both Speaker and Hearers, be so kindly affected, that we may in some measure be perswaded, and convinced, and wrought to holy Resolutions suitable to such Considerations.

I. We

1. We have here the divine Goodness set down in these words, *To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, &c.*

2. Here is our Ingratitude and Provocation, *We have rebelled against him, &c.*

Nor must we leave the words so. Here is a *Though*, which heightens both those considerations. For

1. Which is the highest Commendation, and set-off of God's goodness, that he is full of *mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him.* And

2. Which is also implied, the deepest aggravation of our misdemeanours; that notwithstanding those *mercies and forgivenesses*, we still go on in our *rebellion and disobedience.*

The words are a part of *Daniel's Prayer*, the most pathetick, and the most comprehensive of any we meet with, of this kind, in the whole book of God; a prayer made up of Confessions and Supplications, wherein the Prophet bewails the sins and judgments of his Country-men the Jews now in their Captivity; the *sins*, which had call'd down those heavy Judgments upon Church and State, and the *Judgments* which had justly befall'n them for their heinous sins. And though this Prayer of *Daniel's* were purposely compos'd and suited to the concerns of the whole Nation; yet since every particular person, as part of the Nation he belongs to, adds his own share of Miscarriages to the common stock of national Impiety, and consequently must expect to bear his share in publick Calamities; our *Church* has prudently made choice of this among other Scripture sentences to be made use of in the beginning of her solemn Service, when people are met together in their particular Assemblies to make their Confessions, and to pour out their Supplications to *Almighty God their most merciful Father.*

And in both these senses may this present Scripture be very well taken, both as a *confession* of God's mercy and our own sinfulness, as we read it; and as a *supplication* too for God's mercy and forgiveness, upon our sins and high provocations; as an old Translation, which was used in a former Service-book, has it, and as agreeably to the Original: There it is worded thus; *To thee, O Lord God, belongeth mercy and forgiveness; for we have gone away from thee, and have not hearkened to thy voice.* As if we should say, in short; *O Lord*, we are miserable and wretched sinners thou knowest, and we cannot but acknowledge; therefore have mercy upon us, and forgive us our sins: For so our sinfulness is brought in as a reason and argument for his shewing mercy. *To thee belongeth mercy and forgiveness; for &c.*

First then, Divine Goodness is here recommended to us by two obliging terms, of *mercy* and *forgiveness*.

*Mercy*, the essential Character of his Nature. *Forgiveness*, the gratuitous product and expression of his gracious Will.

*Mercy* in the general, common to us with all our fellow-creatures; and then as a particular Instance and Evidence of that Mercy of his to the children of men; *Forgiveness*.

1 Pet. 4. 19. *Mercy* belonging to him, as he is our faithful Creator; and *forgiveness* issuing from him, as he is our gracious Redeemer.

2 Cor. 1. 3. *Mercy* in the Father self, who is *the father of mercies*: and *forgiveness* for the sake of his Son our Mediator, who by his One perfect oblation of himself has made an atonement for sins, and purchased pardon for them.

*Mercy*

*Mercy* in the ordinary course of his Providence; and *forgiveness* upon the terms and covenant of Grace.

*Mercy* to bestow upon us all good things, I say, to derive his own goodness to us; and *forgiveness* to pardon and to take away all our ills.

And then, this no single *mercy*, no single *forgiveness*: but in the plural number, *mercies* and *forgivenesses*: manifold *mercies* and multiplied *forgivenesses*.

*Mercies* of the right hand and of the left, *mercies* temporal and spiritual, *mercies* personal and national, all kinds and degrees of *mercies* to all sorts and conditions of men; and so likewise *forgivenesses* to all sorts of sinners, for all kinds and degrees of sin; *forgivenesses* for sins of ignorance, of weakness and of deliberation; *forgivenesses* for vitious propensions and evil inclinations, and for wicked habits and indulged customs of sin.

Again, *Mercies* not only for the time past, but for the present also, and for that which is to come: *mercies* from time to time, and at all times, from one end of our lives to the other: *mercies* that are renewed to us every day at the outgoings of each morning and evening. And in the like manner *forgivenesses* for all ages and times of our life: *forgivenesses* for the sins of our childhood, of our youth, and of our riper years: *forgivenesses* for those sins we have already committed, and for those which through the infirmity of nature we may commit hereafter; if we by a true repentance make our selves capable of those forgivenesses.

And lastly, these *mercies* and *forgivenesses* belong to him: They are partly the essential Properties of his Nature; and partly the immediate Results and elicit Acts of his gracious Will: They are so peculiar to him, so necessary to his very Being, that it may as rationally be imagined, that the Lord our God can divest himself of his Deity, as appear or act without these indearing qualities.

Consider we then, sinners as we are, what a gracious God we have to deal with, whose very Nature and Being consists of *mercies* and *forgivenesses*. Let us fill our souls with a reciprocal love and answerable affections to the Lord our God, and bemoan our want of that love, which he hath in so eminent a manner deserv'd from us: and let us draw near to him with faith, and a holy reliance on the Divine goodness, whose characters are all fill'd up with lineaments of love and mercy.

This the greatest Incentive of our ingenuous Devotions, that the God whom we serve, ah! I should say so, but that I may speak with truth, the God whom we ought to serve, is a merciful God. This the greatest Reproach of our Undutifulness, that we do not serve God as we ought to serve him, with whom there is mercy and forgiveness, that he may be feared. Psal. 130 4.

And, O dear God, the necessity of whose very Being hath accomplish'd thee with such Attractives of Love and Respect, who can but love and respect thee, if he do's but see and know thee? and who can but see and know thee, in all the outgoings and emanations of thy mercy, if he do's not wiffully shut his eyes against the Sun? Thou art that Sun, that fountain of light and love, the unexhausted Ocean of goodness and bounty.

O let our souls dazzle themselves in the contemplation of his orient light, whose love hath made him glorious: and immerse themselves in that abyss of goodness, that they may learn from him to love like him, and to be good like him.



'Tis this *mercy* of our God, that makes him God; and 'tis this *mercy* of his, that should oblige us to his service, and make him our God.

And though we be weak and sinful creatures, as he knows we are, and cannot of our selves offer him any service that may of it self challenge acceptance from him; yet as we are weak, if we be not wilful too, he will graciously accept the sincere indeavours of our weakness, he will powerfully assist our infirmities, and influence our imperfections, and will mercifully forgive our involuntary defects and failings; nay, and which is more, will pardon our greater miscarriages, our apostasies and disobediences, if with an humble sense and sorrow for our sins, if with new and vigorous resolutions of duty we return unto him.

Psal. 130.3.

Our God is not extreme to mark what is done amiss; and though the gates of heaven are laid wide open for the righteous, such as we can in no wise pretend our selves to be; yet he hath left a door of hope for us also, even us sinners, (whoever or whatever we may be) by the way of repentance, wherein all true penitents may regain his lost favour, and recover their forfeited happiness.

And what less could be expected from a merciful God, then this, that he should *forgive* sins? For, *gracious God*, what would all thy *mercies* to the sons of men avail them, if thou couldst not, or wouldst not pardon their misdoings, which render them liable to the severity of thy justice? What would all thy *mercies* signifie without thy *forgivenesses*?

Exod. 34.7.

This is the special instance of thy *mercy*, that thou art a God *forgiving sins, and pardoning iniquities*. This the proper Channel in which thy *mercy* flows into the very souls of thy poor creatures.

Thy other *mercies* we lay claim to as our due, as we are thy creatures: but alas! were we only thy creatures, and not thy redeemed ones too, which gives us a right to thy *forgivenesses*, it had been better for us never to have been.

Thou art our *Creatour*, and therefore merciful. Upon this account to thee belong *mercies*; these we have, these we expect, inasmuch as we are the work of thy hands: and no common Artificer designs the destruction of his own works. But then, which is the height of our comfort, and the top of our assurance, when we think of thee, thou art our *Redeemer* also, and therefore to thee in this relation belong *forgivenesses* likewise.

Thy *Creation* has intitled us to thy *mercies*; and our *Redemption*, which was wrought by thy Son, has intitled us to thy *forgivenesses*.

O then let our souls in all dutiful acknowledgment of the goodness of the Lord their *Creatour*, and of our God their *Redeemer*, assure themselves, that what *mercy* we find at his hands, as we are his *creatures*, the same *forgiveness* we shall obtain of him as we are his *redeemed ones*.

Think we of the *mercies* of God in Himself; and of his *forgivenesses* in his Son: his *mercies*, according to the obligations of his own Nature, and his *forgivenesses* according to the Covenant of his Grace; and let us be thankful to God our heavenly Father for his *mercies*, and to the same God the Father of our *Jesus* for his *forgivenesses*.

These, these were the purchase of our Saviour's blood: and as our God in himself is *merciful*, so upon the account of his Son our Advocate, he

he is *faithful and just to forgive us our sins*, if we by an unfeigned repentance confess and forsake them. 1 John 1. 9.

Open we our eyes then, and look about us upon those *mercies* in his providential administrations; and after turn we our eyes inward, and look within us for those *forgivenesses* in his spiritual dispensations.

The *one* concern our bodies and our fortunes, our outward estate and worldly condition. And thus we may say with the Psalmist, *The earth is full of the goodness of God*: the other relate more immediately to the souls of us; to our spiritual and eternal state: and so we may with S. Paul acknowledge, *This is a true saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*. Psal. 33. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 19.

Take we an Inventory of all those *good things* of His, we have at all times from his bountiful hands received; and with all his creatures, let us give him the due praise of his parental care in his continual provisions for us, and his constant preservations over us: and then draw we up a Catalogue of all our own *evil things*, which he by his pardoning grace has already removed, or at least is ready for his part upon our repentance to remove from us; and with all holy Converts and devout Penitents, let us give him the glory of his grace.

For his *mercies* in the bestowal of his good things upon us, let us in gratitude bestow our selves intirely upon him in his service; and for his *forgivenesses*, in the removal of our evil things, let us with the like gratitude renounce them all, and with our utmost diligence avoid them.

But what tongue of *Rhetorick* can set forth, what pen of *Arithmetic* can set down all those *good things* of his, which God in his *mercy* bestows; or all those *evil things* of ours, which by his *forgiveness* he is inclined to take away?

Should we go about to reckon up the myriads of his *mercies*, and the millions of his *forgivenesses*, they would appear like the hosts of Heaven, innumerable. Our mortality it self, the whole glass of our life, would be too short a time for such an undertaking. The due acknowledgment of these must be the business and imployment of eternity, when  *blessing, honour, glory, and power shall* by all the company of heaven be ascribed to him that sits upon the throne, the Father of *mercies*, and to the Lamb, who has purchased his *forgivenesses*. Rev. 5. 13.

And yet let us in these straights of time, call back to our remembrance former passages. Turn we over the Diaries of our lives, and revolve in our thankful minds the particular kindnesses and forbearances of the Lord our God to *Us*, to sinful us; not to engage our selves in the recital of his manifold and universal mercies to all *Others* the children of men.

And surely, may every one of us in an humble sense of his own unworthiness say unto himself, if God hath been so good and gracious to *me*, who must own my self the worst and most undeserving part of mankind, surely there is no one but will joyn with me in the acknowledgments of his daily experimented goodness.

How has he heaped upon me all manner of blessings, more then ever I could have the confidence to desire, or ever can have the merit to deserve!

To speak in behalf of us all; how has he all along from our infancy to our gray hairs, by his wonderful *providence* preserv'd or rescued us

from those dangers, and deliver'd us out of those distresses, into which possibly our own Improvidence has many times brought us?

How by his *power* has he secured and guarded us from those evil chances, to which common mortality, and the frailty of our nature has render'd us liable? and by his *wisdom* retriev'd and recovered us from those inconveniences, whereunto our own folly has full oft betray'd us and laid us open?

How has he with his paternal *care* follow'd us through all the wanderings and mazes of our lives? by his uncrav'd *bleſſing* prospered us in our unlikeliest undertakings? and by his heavenly *bounty* and unexpected as well as undeserved *goodneſſ* supplied us in our wants, furnished us with all things necessary and convenient for us, and bestow'd on us health and plenty, and the great instrument of doing good, credit and reputation?

And then further consider we, how these have been several of them, peculiar *favours* and distinguishing *mercies*, which have been through the permission of his secret, yet most righteous Will, denied to many others, who better deserv'd them at his hand; who have been suffered to miscarry in dangers, been deserted in distress, surpriz'd by casualty, ruin'd by their follies, defeated in their designs, and left destitute in their wants. These have been special vouchsafements of an indearing mercy.

Remember we (I say) how God has done us good, all manner of good, all our days, and no evil; and then let us bethink our selves, what our sins have been, how great, how many; how far he has been from taking advantage against us, as he might have done; what forbearance and long-suffering he hath exercised towards us; how often he has upon our penitent applications forgiven us; how ready he is still so to do; and how to that end he affords us still further time and space of Repentance, and continues to us the abused means of grace, whereby we may be enabled to repent.

And amidst the considerations of those his mercies and forgivenesses, let our souls, as the Psalmist bespeaks his to do, *Bleſſ the Lord, and all that is within us praise his holy Name.* O let us *bleſſ him, and not forget all his benefits, who forgiveth all our iniquities, and crowneth us with loving kindness and tender mercies.*

Pſal. 103. 1, 2,  
3, 4

And these Acknowledgments we should find very great reason to make, should we consider our own deservings, which is the next Head to treat of; *We have rebelled against him, &c.*

But if I should enter upon that task, to hold the glaſs of God's Law before my self and you, wherein we may see our selves, how deformed and miserable we are; should I go about to dissect the principles of rebellious *nature*, and present you with a landskip of our vain and wicked *conversation*, wherein we disobey all the divine precepts; and further by comparing these our *rebellions* and *disobediences* with God's *mercies* and *forgivenesses*, aggravate the one by the other; I should be forced either to wrong my *subject*, or to trespass upon your *patience*.

I told you this *Prayer* was composed by the Prophet in behalf of the whole Nation of the *Jews*, by way of Confession and Supplication; and certainly there is no Nation under Heaven, whose History runs more parallel to that, than This of ours for *mercies* and *rebellions*; for *forgivenesses* and *disobediences*. Our *Israel* has not been behind that of old, either



ther in its priviledges or its provocations; having equalled at least, if not outdone them.

Shall I reckon up God's wonderful providences towards us, and strange deliverances of us? We have all of us (for so the Prophet includes all estates and orders of men) as if we meant to vie with him in *miracle*, been to as great an astonishment wicked almost as he has been gracious; insomuch that *History*, which though sometimes it may flatter the living, yet seldom spares the dead, will, when this Generation is gone off the Stage, make it a question, whether were the greater wonder of the two, that God dealt so graciously with us, or we so ungratefully by him?

Since our miraculous *Restauration* we have so demeaned our selves, as if we thought it had been the meaning of Heaven to restore us only to put us into a capacity of destroying our selves, and of doing that, which our Enemies, when time was, were by an over-ruling providence hinder'd from doing.

But instead of making this scrutiny and inquiry into our own carriage, let us turn those things, which should be matter of *confession*, into *supplication*; which is another sense of the words: *To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, for we have*, &c. which is such a kind of plea, as *David* makes for himself, *Pardon my iniquity, for it is great.* Psal. 25. 11.

One would think this were a strange way of begging pardon for our crimes by aggravating them, which upon that account we rather use to extenuate. But 'tis otherwise in our addresses to God for *mercy* and *forgiveness*. The more sinful and miserable we are, and the less help we have from our selves, the more need we have of his grace and favour; and the more we are humble under the sense of our sins, the fitter objects we are of his *mercy* and *forgiveness*, and the more ready he is to shew mercy and to forgive us.

Let us beseech him then, that notwithstanding our many rebellions and provocations, he would continue those his *merces* and *forgivenesses* to us, and still cause his face to shine upon his *Anointed* and upon his *Sanctuary* which is amongst us, and that (as the Prophet inforces his Prayer, *verse 17.*) *for the Lord's sake*, which the *Jewish* Interpreters themselves expound to be the *Messias*, the Lord *Christ*; for the sake, I say, of our Lord *Jesus Christ*. Amen.

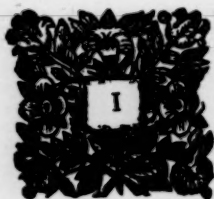
Of

# *Of the Natural Belief and Fear of God.*

A Sermon Preached at *Whiteball* in the Lent-Course. 167<sup>o</sup>.

S<sup>t</sup> James II. xix.

*Thou believest, that there is one God; thou dost well: the Devils also believe and tremble.*



Marth. 17. 21.

Marth. 4. 1, 2, 3

**I**T need not seem strange or impertinent in a time of *fasting and prayer* (as this time of *Lent*, according to the ancient order and usage of the Church ought to be) to make mention of the *Devils*; since they are to be cast out that way, by those methods of *fasting and prayer*. The first *Christian* fast of this kind, kept by our Saviour in the wilderness, was but a preparatory exercise for a conflict with the *tempter*, who, as some tell us, entred the lists in a religious habit.

And surely the whole herd, as the *Text* here presents them, appear in a like dress; 'tis *believing devils*, and *trembling devils*: but they are brought in to another purpose, upon another design of *temptation* (then that was,) to challenge us, as it were, in the great principle of our Christianity, to vie with us in *faith*, which has that effect upon them, that it strikes an aw and dread into their Spirit; and this inward agony of theirs, exprest by outward consternations, it sets them a trembling. Now, *Christian believer*, what hast thou more to shew for thy faith? *Thou believest that there's one God; thou dost well: the Devils also believe and tremble.*

How says the *Apostle*? Is that *well done* for a *Christian* to do but what *the Devils* do? to believe as they believe? No sure; if thou goest no further, if thy *faith* do's not exceed the faith of *Devils*, thou dost not do well; for this faith, which a man has common with them, cannot save him. 'Tis *ironically* spoken then, I and seriously too, to set us forward, that we may not content our selves with those measures of *Religion*, with that sort of *faith*, which the very *Devils* have; but and if we add to our faith charity and good works, then 'twill be *well done* indeed.

There was, it should seem, an early Controversie, even in the *Apostles* times, rais'd by some unwary Christians, betwixt *faith* and *good works* in the matter of *justification*. The unlearned possibly, as *S. Peter* tells us, wresting some difficult places of *S. Pauls* to their own damnation,

2 Pet. 3. 16.

nation, gave *faith* so far the preeminence, as to conclude *works* altogether unnecessary in order to salvation. An opinion of very dangerous consequence to all the designs of Christianity. Wherefore S. James in this *Chapter* takes a great deal of pains to confute it, and by giving *works* their due value, and shewing the insufficiency of a pretended *faith* without them, states and determines the controversy.

For as to S. Paul, 'tis evident to any one that reads him with care, that he opposes *faith* and *works* in this sense only, as *these*, i. e. *works*, were the condition in the *Covenant of nature* (of which *Covenant* the *Jewish Pedagogy* was an extract and copy; for he takes *Moses* along with him into the consideration of that *Covenant*) and as *that*, i. e. *faith* is the condition of the new *Covenant of grace*; and that he do's not oppose *faith* to those *works*, which spring from *faith*, and perfect it; these *works* being both the necessary *consequents*, and also the certain *proofs* of a true *faith*.

And this plainly appears by that particular instance of *Abraham*, taken out of the old Testament, as 'tis applied by S. Paul, and here explain'd by S. James; *Abraham believed, and 'twas imputed unto him for righteousness*. Hence S. Paul infers, that he was justified by *faith*: But how did *Abraham* believe? why, says S. James, he offer'd up his son; and thence he concludes that he was justified by *works*, *verse 21.* that is, as he expounds himself *verse 24. not by faith only*; so that *Abraham believ'd*, is as much as *Abraham obey'd*, and did, at least would have done, what God commanded him to do; for true *faith* lays hold on *precepts* as well as *promises*. Gen. 15. 6. Rom. 4. 3.

Among many other arguments, he produces against this erroneous persuasion, that so magnified *faith*, as to depress and lay aside *works*; and to prove that *faith without works* will not serve a Christian's turn, he brings this in by it self, that *faith alone* is no more then what the *Devils* themselves have; *they believe* there's a God too, as well as such Christians do; nay, he might have said further, that they believe *Christ* come in the flesh, as they often acknowledg'd and confessed, when they were forced to submit to his power. Nay, I might perhaps add, that their belief extends to all *Gospel-mysteries*, to all the *articles* of Christian Religion; and this *faith* of theirs not a bare *historical faith* neither, but a firm assent, not of a cordial adherence indeed, but of a necessary acknowledgment; a *faith*, accompanied with the inmost resentments of conscience, and strong emotions of mind, attested by that religious horror and those dreadful apprehensions they lye under. So that if they excluded *works*, and resolv'd to trust to such an airy *faith*, they were in no better condition then the *Devils* themselves, who, notwithstanding that *faith* of theirs, and those extorted confessions of it, are and will be to all eternity damn'd.

It will not now, I suppose, be expected from me, to spend my hour vainly in a curious inquiry into the nature of those *evil spirits*, or to endeavour an account, what manner of *faith* it is *They* have, which so prevailingly works such dreadful effects in them, as to make them tremble. No; that was not the meaning of the holy Penman, to put us upon an empty useless speculation; but to shame us *Christians*, by this undervaluing and odious comparison, into a practical resolution of examining our selves, and of improving and perfecting our holy *faith* by living up to it; which the *Devils*, for all those servile fears, that haunt them, do not.

For



For truly, if we look abroad into the Christian world, and cast a serious eye upon the generality of those, that go under that name, that have been baptized into the *Christian faith*, we shall find a great *many* (I wish it were not so) that do not at all *believe*; that look upon *religion* only as a *trade*, useful to a certain order of men, and think no body else immediately concern'd in it, and thereupon regard the *Church* and her *Offices* no more then they do any *Tradesman's Shop* or *Wares*, that they have no occasion to deal with: *Others*, that though they do *believe*, and are prettily satisfied in the business of religion and holy ministrations, as having nothing to say against the ground and truth of the thing; yet entertain divine verities with that cold indifferent respect, with so little of self-concern, that they do not lay them much to heart, or suffer them to sink into their consciences, as the *Devils* are forced to do.

And of such *Christians* as these, I cannot say as our Saviour do's, that  
 Marth. 12. 41. the men of *Nineveh*, or those of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, honest Heathens, who  
 Matth. 11. 21. live according to their light; but that the very *Devils* of Hell shall rise up in judgment against them.

These my *Text* has not to do with; I must let them pass: For if the *Devils*, who *believe and tremble*, are damn'd; how can such *Christians*, who to the great shame of human nature, and to the vile reproach of Christianity, let themselves be out-done by diabolical ingenuity, any way expect to be saved?

I shall therefore suppose at present, that all, who call themselves *Christians*, are *believers*, and that they are at least so far advanced in that faith, that they are really affected with the truths of God, and are touched at conscience; and ly under convictions, and have, out of a sense of guilt, and a foresight of those miseries, their unrepented sins will betray them to, have an awe and a conscious fear of God and his Judgments imprinted upon their spirits; and I shall endeavour so to address my discourse to *them*, that they may not sit down under such notions and apprehensions, as if they alone were sufficient; since the *Devils* themselves come up so far in their sentiments; but may be excited, what the Apostle advises, to work out their salvation with that fear and trembling.  
 Phil. 2. 12.

In order to which design I shall make use of this method.

1. To shew the *grounds* and *causes*, which may put even natural conscience it self in this fear and *trembling*; what 'tis has that force and operation upon the mind, thus to scare and terrifie it.

2. To discover the *hindrances* and *discouragements*, whereby this awful belief is rendred many times a work of no perfection, no sincerity, no lastingness; so that notwithstanding these apprehensions, a man continues in known sin, and goes on still in the high road to Hell.

3. To apply to our selves, and to lay before us some such *rules* and *directions*, as may help us to make a right use and due improvement of this faith and those terrors attending it, to the perfecting the great work, which shall at any time be begun in us.

1. For the first thing propos'd; the *grounds* and *causes*, that should thus set conscience on trembling.

*Trembling* is an affect and symptom of *fear*; now this fear proceeds naturally from an awe and apprehension of a superior power, that *will* call us to an account, and *can* by his sovereign authority to all eternity determine us to an estate of happiness or misery, according to our demerit; of which supreme power *conscience* it self stands in greater awe then any man do's of his conscience.

This

This apprehension is partly *innate* in us, and interwoven in the very constitution and frame of man's mind; and partly *imprest* and forced upon conscience by supernatural discoveries.

That we call the *instinct* of natural conscience it self: this the efficacy and power of *God's word* upon conscience.

On this head, because we hasten to that which more directly tends to practice, we shall be but very brief, as supposing, if Scripture is to be believed, it will easily be granted.

1. As to *natural instincts*, the conscience of all men in the world is charged with the notion of a *God*; and from that natural awe and dread, it has of him, cannot but *tremble* at the apprehension. Especially, when it lies under the conviction of *guilt*, then it fears him under the notion of a *Judge*.

And however some men, through wicked habits and long continuance in sin, deboth their principles, and *fear their consciences*, and what they can, make themselves *past feeling*; though by several artifices they endeavour to elude and put by these thrusts of conscience in their sides, by divertisements of pleasure and jollity and the like; yet they will return upon them, and rejoyt with bitterness, when their sin shall find them out, when they and their conscience meet in private to a cool and serious debate. 2 Tim. 4.2.  
Eph. 4.19.  
Psal. 36.2.

Now granting a man could so harden himself, as to be utterly stupid and *insensate*; because some there are, who by endurance of cold have numm'd their senses, that they can without any pain or feeling thrust pins up to the heads in their arms, shall we therefore conclude that the flesh of man is naturally void of sense, and that 'tis only our own tenderness, and a fond humour and fancy, that makes us apprehensive of bodily pain? because some wicked men have been so hardy and wise to their own hurt, as to wear out these notions, and to confute (as they think) these *religious fears*, which hold the rest of mankind in bondage; therefore shall we make a peremptory resolution, that there are no such things?

For *alas!* when wicked men have done all they can, they cannot with all their arts arrive at this *insensibility*, nor extinguish these notions, however they may for a while smother and stifle them. The *Devils* themselves, in spite of their *reasons*, in spite of their *wills*, though it be their interest to be at ease, which the *want of sense* effects no less than the *absence of pain*, and they have been now some thousand years contriving their ease; yet cannot but *believe*, and are forc'd to confess it in awful acknowledgments.

2. Then as to the efficacy of *God's word*; 'tis of that searching and convincing nature, that S. Paul likens it to a *two edg'd sword*, which cuts both ways, *even to the dividing between the bones and the marrow*; and is a *discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*: and this *ἡ ἀντιπαρθεσία*, as to the energy and force of it. S. James compares it to a *looking-glass*, shewing us our spiritual deformity, which must needs be very frightful; and this *ἡ ἀντιπαρθεσία*, as to the evidence and demonstration of it. Heb. 4.12.  
James 1. 23.

An instance we have in *Felix*, who by *Paul's* ministry and powerful application, having his conscience awakened and startled with supernatural truths, and his guilt laid open, *fell a trembling*, and lay panting under the convictions of an ill led-life, and of a sad reckoning to follow. But he felt it lye so fore and heavy upon him, that he could not long indure it, but slung it off with as much haste as he could; he was indeed

\* L seriously

seriously affected for the time, but he could not maintain it, but in the conflict betwixt *conscience* and *lust*, took the wrong side, and gave his lust the better; which is to be our next *Theme*, how it comes about, that men thus desert their consciences, and do not stand to their convictions.

II. And those *Impediments*, which notwithstanding these apprehensions and expressions of fear do hinder and keep off men from a thorough conversion, that in despite of conscience they still hold on in the same course of sin; may mainly be these *five*.

1. *A prepossession of some sturdy lust*, which having master'd conscience, has her in bonds, and leads her captive to the law of sin in the members, and thwarts and throws off the work of grace, which is at any time begun in our hearts.

2. *Worldly mindedness*; when the soul of a man is riveted to earth, and has there taken root, and grows; when the man has center'd himself upon his own interest, and has bottom'd his felicity upon the good things of this life; 'tis hard then to convince him of any other happiness.

3. *The extreme difficulty of Change*, and the great uneasiness, when we come at any time in earnest to try, of putting off old habits and customs of sin; which makes men willing to hold still to corrupt nature, where they find themselves at most ease.

4. *Procrastination* and putting off from time to time; when men would fain a little longer, with the sluggard in the *Proverbs*, injoy the pleasures of sin, and delay their repentance to their Death-bed, or to old age, or the like.

5. *A desperate Presumption*; when a sinner discourages himself with the thoughts of an impossibility of being other than what he is, and thereupon deliberately and resolutely goes on headlong to his destruction.

1. *First, The prepossession of lust.* *Intus existens prohibet aliunde adveniens*; that which is got in already, keeps out better, that should come in place. There's both a *Physical* and a *Logical* repugnance.

There's first a Reluctancy and opposition; the doors are barr'd, the *strong man* has got possession, and will not quit till a stronger than he come; and there's besides an Incompatibility and inconsistency too; The Majesty of *grace*, and the fondness of *lust*, will not well agree together, nor cohabit in the same soul. *Non bene conveniunt* (says he) *nec in una sede morantur Majestas & amor.*

Vessels of a narrow neck will neither take in, nor let out in haste; such vessels are the souls of men, it must be a leasurely operation, that empties a soul of *lust*, or fills it with *grace*.

'Tis true, the *grace* of God is of it self victorious over corrupt nature, and seems in some instances, where passage to her conquests has been denied, to break open the way by force, and remove all obstructions. But these are rare examples, such as *S. Paul's Conversion* was, though he too says of himself, that he was *obedient to the heavenly call*. God's usual method is to enter upon no man against his will; and the *Psalmist* tells us, that *his people are willing in the day of his power.*

Otherwise did his *grace* act irresistibly always, there would hardly any man in the world but be a Convert: for every man one time or other has these *trembling fits*; which, as they are *effects* of their own *guilt*, so they are



are some probable signs of God's grace likewise, that convinces them of their sins.

God lays life and death before us, and leaves us to our option; nor is he wanting to excite and incline us, to assist and inable us by his grace: but then there are those that resist his Spirit, that refuse grace proffer'd, and reject God's counsel, which was for their good, to their own hurt (as we read the Pharisees did) ἰδιόθεν τὸν βούλῃ, they disappointed his design. But to those that make good use of that grace, which he allows them, he affords still fresh supplies and further assistances to inable them yet more and more. Deut. 30. 15. Acts 7. 51. Luke 7. 30.

2. Secondly, Neer kin to lustful prepossession is Worldly mindedness. No seed grows to purpose in the thorny ground; the cares of this life choke the word and stifle the Spirit. Hence our Saviour pronounces it so hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. It is easier for a Camel, says he, to go through the eye of the Needle; the name of a narrow Gate in Jerusalem (as some Criticks inform us,) where the Camels were wont to have their packs taken off, ere they could get in. Matth. 13. 22. Mark 10. 25.

God and Mammon cannot be serv'd together; the world and the word are as unreconcilable, as earth and heaven: worldly wisdom is enmity to God. The natural man ὁ φυσικὸς, doth not receive the things of the Spirit of God; he has neither capacity for them, nor inclination to them; he neither can nor will entertain them, though indeed his cannot is because he will not. Matth. 6. 24. 1 Cor. 2. 14.

Martha may hear a snatch, but her worldly business calls her off again. A Worldling cannot be constant to his devotion; a Sermon at Church may set him a trembling, and work somewhat with him at present; but his Religion, like some operations in the Mathematicks, is quickly got, and as quickly forgot. 'Tis but a qualm of conscience, a Paroxysm and an Ague fit of devotion, not a lasting habit of well grounded piety. Luke 10. 40.

God do's not, sure enough, allow us to leave the world, till he call us off; but we are oblig'd to quit it, at least in our affections and resolutions, or else we are not fit for his service, or his Sons Discipleship.

3. Thirdly, From this Prepossession and Worldliness ariseth partly the Difficulty of Change. 'Tis very hard, and goes to the heart of any customary sinner to break off from old acquaintance. S. Austin in his Confessions has a notable passage to this purpose, where he brings in his lusts hanging fondly about him, and expostulating with him, why he would, Unkind man! leave them so.

Habits, as they are acquir'd by long use, so are after the same manner to be put off and lost again. Custom is another nature, and to alter nature is almost τὸν ἀδυνάτων one of the impossible things.

Besides, 'tis not only hard to forsake what we have been wonted to, but there's a seeming difficulty in what we are to turn to.

But if we would but lay aside our prejudices and try, our new-birth would not be so difficult, would we but work kindly with our throws, and make use of that grace, wherewith God is ready to assist nature; thus we should find the new creature, a work no less easie to be attain'd, then 'tis highly advantageous when 'tis attain'd.

Only some people out of a softness of spirit fancy hardship, and rather then undergo a little trouble, continue in a state of extreme and unavoidable danger; as Horfes, being surrounded with fire, stand still and tremble and burn.

Acts 24. 25.

4. *Fourthly*, From this difficulty of changing, proceeds in part *Procrastination*. The Governour told *Paul*, he would send for him at a more convenient season; but that convenient season we hear not a word of in the whole story after. *Conviction* is a sore thing, and lies close; people soon grow weary of it, and bid it come again to morrow, but that morrow never comes. How many miscarry with putting off thus from day to day, from year to year? and the longer they delay, the more unready they are still.

Hebr. 3. 7.

Prov. 27. 1.

But hear what the Spirit says, *To day if ye will hear his voice*; which should quicken us the more, when as we know not what a day may bring forth.

Matth. 24. 19.

'Tis *S. Bernard's* note upon *Vae pregnantibus*, wo to those that are with child in those days, that Hell is full of good purposes: When men through their own improvidence and ill husbandry have not allow'd themselves time, or by God's just judgment, for their wanton and frequent refusals, have not had time allow'd them for bringing forth their intentions into act.

For I am obliged to that charity by my very function, to hope well of all mankind, and to think that there's no one so resolutely wicked, but that he means one time or other to leave off his vicious course.

This in judgment of charity (I say) though in judgment of discretion too it must be granted, there are some men, that even in this life arrive at that pitch of wickedness, as to come to a desperate presumption, which we named for the last impediment.

Gen. 4. 13.

5. *Fifthly, Desperate presumption*. I put them both together. For where there's one soul prejudic'd by meer despair, there's thousands are lost by presumption. We read but of three or four that have gone that way; *Cain* the murderer, the traytour *Judas*, *Achitophel* the politician, and poor distracted *Spiras*; but whole droves travel daily in that other road to Hell.

And this is most properly the *Devil's* case, who would be damn'd because he would be damned; whose proud malice against his Sovereign is such, that he would not accept a restitution to his former dignity from which he fell, were it proffer'd him upon the terms of submission.

It is to be fear'd, there's many a man of his mind, who unless they can keep their lusts as well as save their souls, are utterly resolv'd against salvation. When men are come to the very precipice and height of sin, that (as 'tis hardly possible they should grow worse,) so they now despair of ever growing better, and therefore desperately resolve to be as wicked as they can.

Thus though convinc'd in judgment, and trembling in their guilty consciences, yet sadly they put all to the venture.

Perf.

A man in this condition is got beyond remorse, and plays with his damnation; & imo *Demerjus*, *summâ rursus non bullit in undâ*, sinks like lead to the bottom, never to rise up more.

And

And when a man has thus given up himself to the swinge of his lust, tis just for God to give him up too. *Let him that is filthy be filthy still*; Rev. 22. 11. that now henceforward they seem to sin on by God's *commission*, as well as by their own *resolution*.

'Tis true, there's mercy with God, but 'tis *that he may be fear'd*; and Psal. 130. 4. to what end are God's mercies, if a man has no mercy for his own soul? to what purpose our Saviours sufferings and merits, if we will not be sav'd?

God offers us his *grace*; but then we must use it, if we mean it shall do us any good. 'Tis not grace proffered, but grace accepted and improv'd will save us.

In a word, as long as there's *life*, there is *hope*; 'tis God's infinite mercy, that we are still in life, and so not out of hope. O let us make our peace with God, *while we are in the way*; there's nothing to be done after at our journeys end. Matth. 5. 25.

Do not resolve, *dear Christian*, any thing rashly and unkindly against thy self; and God for his part will conclude none to destruction, but those that conclude themselves by final impenitence: Hence it is, that the *sin against the Holy Ghost* is said to be irremissible, because 'tis suppos'd to exclude the possibility of repentance. Matth. 12. 31.

III. Wherefore that this *faith*, accompanied with this *trembling awe*, which not only the worst of men find, but the very fiends themselves are so indued with, that they cannot shake it off, may grow up in us to a serious *repentance* and a new *obedience*, and so prove a *saving faith*; we come now in the *last* place to lay before you those *directions*, which will teach us how to manage those impressions upon conscience, and to work out our salvation with these fears and tremblings. III.

For there's the blessed advantage we have of those *infernal spirits*; therein lies the difference of our interest from theirs in divine mercy, that though they *believe and tremble*, for all they lie under the present sad sense of heavy vengeance, and the dreadful expectations of more and worse, they cannot *repent*, and consequently can proceed to no further degree either of *faith* or *hope*.

Their resolv'd malice and hatred of God first, and then his just sentence upon them has long since concluded them to an unalterable state, and render'd them incapable of favour; 'tis otherwise with fal'n man. They cannot mend their condition; we may mend ours, unless we will be *Devils* too, and which is such a sort that Hell scarce affords, Devils to our selves.

This *fear* and *trembling* in us is improveable, as being the very principle of heavenly wisdom. *The fear of God* (says the Wiseman) and Prov. 9. 10. his Royal Father had said it before him, *is the beginning of wisdom*. Psal. 111. 10.

Those *rules* and *directions* then which I shall propose for our help, that conscience, when she falls under such awful apprehensions, may have her perfect work, are such as these; and I shall speak to them but briefly, as the time will permit, every one of them being such as would require a just discourse.

First, *To take the present advantage of our selves*, when we find our heart at any time warm and soft within us: This melting season is a fit time for the *Spirit* to set to his *seal*: To pursue convictions home, till they



they come up to perfection; not to neglect such gracious opportunities, but when we find God's Spirit gently breathing upon our souls, to hoist up the sails of our affections; when we perceive our conscience smothering under the apprehension of God's wrath due to sin, to blow it up into bright flames of a holy zeal against sin.

2. Then honestly and sincerely *to apply our selves to those means God by his word and providence affords us.* We must seek God while he may be found, and where he may be found: The Sanctuary and the Closet are those places, where he has promis'd we shall find him, and though perhaps, *devout soul*, thou maist not in some instances of thy piety, in some addresses of thy devotion, meet with present benefit, yet do not be disheartned, it will come; nay, as the Prophet tells thee, *though he tarry, yet wait for him; for he will surely come, and will not tarry.*

Isa. 55.6.  
Hab. 2.3.  
Luke 21. 19.  
Psal. 9.18.

*Pious soul*, have a little patience, and in that patience thou shalt possess thy self the while, and anon thy God too; for *the patient abiding of the meek shall not go away disappointed.*

3. Next to *keep our selves always well employ'd*; which is the surest way of keeping out temptation, and of securing conscience from sudden attempts and surprizes. Christ call'd his Disciples at their employment. Idleness is the grand inlet to all manner of vice. If it be asked, why any man do's wicked acts of any kind; *In promptu causa est, desidiosus erat*, 'tis a ready answer, he wanted better employ. Conscience, when she do's not keep a man's loins girt with the girdle of truth, and bestow him upon honest business, he is apt to let himself loose into that which is worse.

Ovid:

The Devil (as one of the Fathers, I think *Tertullian*, tells the story) being ask'd the reason of his confidence, how he durst to seize a Christian soul, ('twas a young Lady that he had possess'd) makes this answer, *Inveni in meo*, I found her upon my own ground, I caught her a seeing a prophane Stage-play.

4. Amidst these Rules let me insert *two particular cautions*; The one *to take heed of vicious excesses even in lawful pleasures*; those being very apt at the very instant to debauch conscience, and by degrees insensibly to harden and stupify it; Sensuality brings a *callus*, a hard crustiness over the soul. *Their heart*, says the Psalmist, *is as fat as brawn*; and such hearts are likely past feeling.

Psal. 119.70.

In the old world they were *eating and drinking*, and building, and *marrying*, and *giving in marriage*, and the flood came upon them, and swept them all away. Justifiable actions all in themselves, as being all agreeable to God's will, and to the intents of nature; but they did nothing else. It is the *excess* that is blamed, that they were wholly taken up with them. That render'd them secure, and their carnal security fitted them for destruction.

Matth. 24.38.

I grant, God allows and commands *Feasting* as well as *Fasting* sometimes, and as the *Preacher* tells us, *to eat and to drink*, and to live cheerfully upon what God blesses us with, is *a man's portion* in this life; and this is done then, and only then, certainly best then, when we enjoy the Giver in his gifts.

Ecc. 5. 18.

*Wine and women*, says the Prophet, *take away the heart*, i. e. in the immoderate use, when a man is wholly addicted and enslaved to them, they *take away the heart*, not only from God, but from the *man* himself too, taking him off from the pursuance of his secular *interests*, as well as of his *devotions*, and vitiating and slugging his *reason*

Hos. 4.11.

*reason* and his parts together with his *conscience*.

5. The other, *to avoid profane company*, as a pestilent contagion, by which impiety is propagated and encouraged; the fear of God, and all religious reverence sensibly decay'd and worn off from the minds of men.

'Tis the humour and mode of *some men* to talk at that rate, as if they had read Scripture on purpose to abuse it, and to make jests out of it, and to turn all serious and sacred things into *ridicule*, and scarce ever name God but when they blaspheme him. These are dangerous companions, *fiends* rather than men; walking *pests*, that infect the very air they breath in. So *the chair of scorners* in the first Psalm is render'd by the Greek Interpreters *καθιδεα λοιμῶν*, a *chair of plagues*.

I know not how the condition of some mens place, and their manner of education may have made such mens converse necessary to them; but certainly it concerns all that have any fear of God, not to have any thing to do with such persons vices, but rather to reprove them; and if they have any value for their own piety, to check and discountenance such insolent impieties. Eph. 5. 11.

6. *To make our faith as practical as we can*, by an impartial hatred of all known *sins*, and the due and diligent observance of all necessary *duties*. This would mightily enlarge the awful regards of conscience; and the more conscience it self stands in awe of God, the more will a man stand in awe of his conscience.

And yet 'tis very *sad* (and I wish it were not as *true*) that there are *some*, that love to be told of *sins* and *duties*, that they may hug the one, and slight the other with the greater advantage, that they may caress and complement their corruptions at an extraordinary rate in open defiance of conscience. They and their lusts are beholden to the instructions of the Pulpit for their mutual indearments to one another. Reproofs, like poinant fauce, quicken their carnal appetites afresh. They are best pleas'd with committing their sin, when they are most convinced they should not; and when God's *spirit* and their own *conscience* has at any time been ready to knock off their shackles and fetters, and make them free men, they have not only tamely, but fondly too, thrown themselves up into a voluntary captivity.

'Tis so; such there are too many of us, (may a gracious God forgive our many prevarications and provocations in this kind) too many of us, I say, who lying under the immediate obligations of Divine *light* and *love*, under the kindly motions of his *Spirit*, and the powerful applications of his *word*, and the plain convictions of our own *consciences*, have prov'd *Ephraimites*, and turned aside like a deceitful bow. Psal. 78. 57.

O! where was then our *faith*? where was our religious trembling awe the while?

7. In the close of all, and above all, *to add to our serious endeavours and all those foregoing methods, our fervent prayers to God*, private and publick, for further and further assistances of grace, which will not be denied to those that either use it, if they have it, or ask it if they have it not; for those are the two promises: *Ask and it shall be given unto you*, and *To him that bath shall be given*. So S. Paul joyns industry

stry and devotion together, *Rom. 12. 11. not slothful in business, fervent in spirit.* We should be so *industrious*, he means, as if we were to do the business, whatever we undertake, our selves: and so *devout*, as if we left it all to God to do for us.

*Prayers* are the lungs of the soul; while they move and play, conscience is alive; but when they have done, when this breath is once gone, 'tis an infallible fatal *symptom* of spiritual death, that conscience is departed.

For since God is the Author of all our blessings, the giver of all that we enjoy; he must be a *brute* and no man, that denies this; for let every man look back into the Diary of his own life, and he shall find experimentally by those *preservations* and *deliverances*, by those *provisions* and *cares*, by those *mercies* and *judgments*, which have all along from his youth up attended him, that God hath been continually about him.

James 1. 17.

Since then 'tis so, that from God come all good things, and that we subsist by a constant and immediate dependence upon him; for any man to design to live without God, and to take no notice of him in all his dealings; to keep no intercourse with him, to make no addressees to him, is a sad sign of a very stupid and lifeless hopeless condition.

For indeed, how can any man, that has cut off his dependences from God, expect that either *body* or *soul* should prosper, that his *very temporal*, as well as *eternal* designs and interests should meet with any success without God's assistance? and how can that be expected, unless it be asked in prayer? God having not promis'd it but upon that condition; but on the contrary threatned judgments, and blasts, and defeats to those that forget him, and call not upon his name.

1 John 4. 18.

O happy, *thrice* happy; *temporally*, *spiritually*, and *eternally* happy those devout souls, whose all enjoyments are the incomes and returns of their prayers! *Blessings*, which are fetch'd down from Heaven that way, are blessings indeed, peculiar favours and distinguishing mercies; such blessings, as influence the soul, exalting her out of her humble state, and graciously raising those servile fears and *tremblings*, where-with the sense of her guilt, and the conscience of her unworthiness doth naturally compass her, into holy and filial *confidences* in the love of God, whereby of *servants* we are made *children*, advanced into a state of *perfect love*, which may *cast out all fear*, and translated from the mean rudiments of that lower kind of *trembling faith*, which the very *Devils* are not without, into some resemblances of *Angelical* perfection; that instead of *believing and trembling* we may well-near in this life come to seeing and enjoying.

And that is that we have been about; for whereas there are three or four Passions, which are the great Instruments by which human nature is govern'd, *Fear*, *Love*, *Shame*, and *Æmulation*; here we have them all.

*Fear* is naturally lodg'd in the conscience of man, which if we follow those *directions*, may be managed and improv'd into *love*.

Again, 'tis a foul *shame* to be outdone in faith by the evil Spirits, but having escap'd that shame, you may proceed to a holy *emulation* of the blessed *Angels*, whom if you can be like here,  
doing



doing God's will readily, constantly and cheerfully on earth, as Matth. 6. 10. they do it in Heaven, you shall be made equal to them hereafter; Matth. 22. 30. when you shall, together with those heavenly Courtiers, attend upon the Throne and the Lamb, who in our nature is advanced far above all principalities and powers, and now sits at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father, to whom with the Father, &c. Eph. i. 20.

## Of Self-Examination.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* before the Family, *March 3. 167<sup>7</sup><sub>8</sub>*. being a Communion-day.

1 Cor. XI. xxviii.

*But let a man examin himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*



AMONG other disorders in the Church of *Corinth*, one, and not the meanest, was, that they were very irregular and scandalous at their Sacramental meetings, which the Apostle censures and rectifies in this *Chapter*, from the seventeenth *verse* to the end. He brings them back to the first institution, that *The Lord Jesus in the night wherein he was betray'd, took bread, &c.* which very form of words the Church has transcribed into her *Communion Office*. And then shewing them the danger of unworthy receiving, he directs them how to prevent it, in the words of the *Text*, by taking themselves to task aforehand, and examining themselves before they approach to the holy Table.

This for the coherence.

Now though this be a particular Instance from that abuse and ill practice of the *Corinthians*, upon which this Rule is here recommended to them: yet 'tis plain by the *Context*, that 'tis by immediate consequence grounded upon the *Institution* it self, and all the purposes of it, and is therefore of a more general use, and applicable to all cases, that are incident to the receiving of this *Sacrament*. Nay further; we must consider it as a *moral rule* and direction of a vast comprehension and an universal extent, as to our whole Christian state, in the ordinary course of piety to God, and conversation with men; that we frequently and constantly call our selves to account, but especially upon such solemn occasions as this, when we are to come to the *Lord's Supper*: this duty of *self-examination*, as it is particularly necessary now; as that without which we cannot assure our selves of any benefit by our coming, but must rather for our unworthiness and rashness expect quite contrary, temporal judgments, and eternal damnation; so being a duty of very great usefulness at all times, that we may be well acquainted with our selves, and find out our spiritual wants. One of the Wisemen having comprized all knowledge in this, *Γινῶσι σεαυτὸν*, for a man to know himself. *Let a man, &c.*

We shall therefore so handle the duty of examining our selves, as that  
*first*

first we may deliver the *general* Use and Method of it, whereby it may indifferently serve to all purposes of Christianity; and then *secondly*, as 'tis more *particularly*, and in a more especial manner to be suited and accommodated to our worthy receiving the *Sacrament*, to the *eating that bread, and drinking that cup* to our spiritual comfort, and the benefit and improvement of our souls.

1. In that *general* part, we are to consider first the Duty it self, *examination*; and that both by way of *trial* in making a strict search and severe scrutiny into our selves; and by way of *approbation* also, (for so *should* the word here used signifies, *to try* metal and find it right and answerable to the test) when we can assure our selves of those capacities and qualifications, which may intitle us to the blessings promised; of such a fitness and preparation, as may bear some proportion to those conditions which God requires at our hands.

*Secondly*, The Subject of this trial and proof; that which is to undergo this examination, and that is a man's *self*. And here it will concern us very neerly to throw self at as great a distance from our selves as we can, that we may make a sound impartial judgment of our selves, without favour or affection, and bring in a true sincere verdict of our case.

*Thirdly*, The Rule and Test, by which we must examin our selves; which must not be the *Lesbian* rule of our own deceitful appetite, or corrupt reason; but some superiour *law*, the revealed will of God, according to which he would have us to walk in order to salvation, both for *practice*, and that summarily in the *ten Commandments*, the abridgment of the moral Law; and for *faith*, in the doctrine of the *Gospel*.

I. *First* then, for the *Duty*, to *examin* our selves; every thing is valued to be of more or less worth, according to the usefulness and fitness it has to its End, peculiar to it, as 'tis such or such a thing: and thus 'tis usual with the *Stoick* Schools to argue from ordinary common instances.

The goodness of a *House* do's not consist in this, that it has a beautiful outside, or that it has splendid rich furniture within; these are things accessory and ornamental, but that it affords convenience for habitation, to keep out the injuries of weather, and to be fitted for the use and comforts of life: for this is that which answers the true proper end of a House.

That's a good *Ship*, that is a good sayler, and so built as to indure storms, and live in a rough Sea, and perform a voyage well; and if it be not so, though it should have all its cordage and shrowds of silk, and be all inlaid and gilt, that would not be enough to make it deserve that name.

A good *Sword* is that which is made of good metal, and cuts well, be it never so plain; the design and purpose of a Sword being to cut: whereas let a wooden or leaden blade be cloathed with a velvet scabbard, and have its hilt stuck thick with diamonds, not answering the end for which swords were made, it may not improperly be called a rich sword, but not a good sword, nor indeed in strict propriety of speech a sword at all; because it cannot do what a sword was design'd to do.

So not only in Artificial things, we our selves have devis'd, but in things Natural too, when we apply them to our use, we judge of their worth by their usefulness. A *Horse*, let him be of never so fine a shape, and have never so gawdy trappings on, we do not value him for that; we may



say he is a fine Horse indeed ; but if he be broken-winded, if he be a dull heavy goer, he is no good Horse for all his finery, as being unsuitable to his end, and to that use we design a Horse for.

And thus is it to be in our making an estimate, and passing a judgment upon *our selves*. We must consider the end for which we were made. It is not a *rich* man, that has by his industry got a great deal of wealth together ; nor a *handsom* person, that has all the native allurements and advantages of beauty to set him off ; nor a good *natur'd-man*, whose winning behaviour and ready compliance recommends him to peoples good opinion, or the like, that is presently to pass for a *good man*. These are things extrinsecal to human nature, and no way essential to the being of man ; nor in any sense to be esteem'd good things at all, any further then they may be made subservient to the end of man. He alone is a *good man*, who answers that end for which man was created. And what's that ? to act, and think, and discourse, and behave himself all over like a man, according to the rules of right reason. He that do's thus is a man : for it is reason that constitutes a man.

Gen. 4. 33.

The greatest part of mankind are degenerated from this ; and if we were to stand to this character, we must reckon millions of people, whole herds and droves of men amongst *pecora campi*, the beasts of the field, as having given themselves up to the slavish subjection of their sensual appetite, and by their foolish vicious designs and practices, banishing themselves (with the *Assyrian* Monarch) out of the society of rational creatures, and doing nothing worthy the nature and dignity of man. How many thousands are there in the world now living, that live to no purpose in the world, but to eat and drink, and trouble themselves and others, and take up their time about that, which will come to no account at all at the last ?

If a poor *beathen* Philosopher were alive now to take the poll of men, and try them according to the bare standard of natural reason, how many hundreds of men would he throw aside as *nulls* and ciphers, things utterly insignificant to those names they are called by, for one that might pass for currant coin ?

For when all *covetous, ambitious, voluptuous, vicious, debosh'd* persons are cast on one side ; and all *idle, formal, empty, slight, ignorant, pretending* people, put on the other side, there would be very few left in the middle road of *vertue*, very few that might fairly challenge the name of *men*.

But then we have a further pitch to fly still, a more severe test to bring our selves to our examination, as being by God's special favour design'd for a higher end ; to have communion and fellowship with himself, with God the Father, and God the Son, and God the holy Ghost : a God, that their Philosophy could not teach them, to be known only by supernatural revelation ; and to be concern'd within the blessed intercourses of his Divine influences and our devout addressses, in the mutual reciprocations of inward blessings and spiritual services.

'Tis not enough for us to be *good men*, but we must be *good Christians* too. And if good men are so scarce, that the *Cynick* lighted a candle at noon, and carried his lanthorn about to find out an honest man, how scarce must good Christians needs be ?

O how is the account of mankind now shrunk and contracted into a narrow compass indeed ? Where shall we find the man that dare undergo  
this

this strict examination, that can abide the severity of this trial, where *reason* is to be sublimated into *faith*, and the rational *soul* to be wholly subject to the *Spirit*; where flesh is to be mortified, the law of the members resisted, and our very understandings and wills to be denied and disown'd? O! where shall we find such a man as this?

O! happy would it be for us, if every one of us, when we bring our selves to examination, could meet with such a person in our own bosoms.

Come then; let us inquire and ravage into our selves, and take the *candle of the Lord*, which he hath set up in every of our souls, our own *conscience* along with us, to help us to discover our selves to our selves: and if we do not find our selves to be such, as God requires and expects we should be, let us beg of him earnestly, in the sense of our own wants and defects, that he would make us such as he would have us to be. *Let a man examin himself*: that's every man; for 'tis spoken indefinitely, you and I, and every body. *Examining* is every one's Duty, and the Subject is *himself*. That's the second thing. Prov. 20. 27.

II. *Himself*. People are generally too forward in examining *others*, and are so taken up with impertinence and things that do not concern them, that they have no time to be acquainted with *themselves*; like idle Travellers, that can tell you a world of stories concerning foreign Countries, and are very strangers at home. Study of our selves is the most useful knowledge, as that without which we can know neither God nor any thing else a right, as we should know them.

And it highly concerns us to know our selves well; nor will our ignorance be pardonable, but prove an everlasting reproach, in that we and our selves are to be inseparable companions in bliss or torment to all eternity: and if we, through neglect of our selves here, do not in time provide for that eternity, so as to secure to our selves future happiness; God will at last make us know our selves, when it will be too late to make any good use of that knowledge, but a remediless repentance that we and our selves ever met in company; when poor ruin'd *self* shall curse negligent sinful *self* to all ages, and with direful imprecations upon that day and hour, that first joyn'd them together.

Again, God has given *man* that advantage above all other creatures, that he can with reflex acts look back and pass judgment upon himself. But seeing *examination* here supposes *two* persons, the *one* to examin, the *other* to be examined, and yet seems to name but one, *a man to examin himself*: unless a man and himself be two, and thus every one of us have *two selves* in him; let us first examin who 'tis here is to execute the office of *examinant*; and then who 'tis that is to be the party *examin'd*.

Do's the whole man in this action go over himself by parts? or do's the regenerate part call the unregenerate part to account? or if there be a divided *self* in every man, do's one self examin the other self, as to wit, the spiritual self, the carnal self? or is it some one faculty in a man, by which a man brings all his other faculties and parts to trial? such a one as the conscience may be? If so; how then is conscience it self tried, having no Peers to be tried by, as being superior to all other human powers, and calling them all to the barr?

*Why?* yes; I do think 'tis the *conscience* of a man which examines the man, and every part of him, both spiritual and carnal, as well regenerate as unregenerate, and it self and all. For hence it was called *conscientia*,

Rom. 2. 15.

*entia*, as being that faculty by which a man becomes conscious to himself, and is made knowing together with himself of all that good and evil that lies working in his nature, and has been brought forth in his actions. And this is not only the Register, and Witness, and Judge of all parts of man, and of all that they do, but is so impartial an Officer also, that it will give a strict account of all it self at any times does, *accusing or excusing* even it self in every motion of its own.

Come then, let you and I step aside awhile into our selves, and taking every one his *conscience* along with him, examin and try what we can find there, and that according to this Apostles division of man, 1 *Theß.* 5. 23. into three parts, the *spirit, soul, and body*; which he makes to be τὸ ἐν ᾧ ὁλόκληρον, *the whole of us*, the intire and compleat man.

Jer. 31. 33.

1. *First* then for thy *spirit*: Dost thou find a principle of life and light in it? dost thou feel the influences of God's Spirit upon it, illuminating thy *understanding*, and in bright characters imprinting on thy *mind* the resemblances of divine nature, and writing his law in thy *heart*, and convincing thy *reason* of supernatural truths, and by this means fastning thee close to himself, and making thee one with God? Or is thy intellectual faculty still darkned and estranged from God?

Hebr. 6. 4, 5.

Canst thou receive spiritual things, and hast thou any taste of the heavenly gift, and of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come?

Hebr. 11. 6.

Rom. 2. 6.

Art thou abundantly resolv'd, that there is a God, the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and that there is a future state, a life after this, when rewards shall be distributed to every one according to his works? and art thou assur'd in thy self of the immortality of thine own spirit?

If thou art verily perswaded of these things; then ask thy *conscience* whether thou hast seriously endeavoured throughout the course of thy life, to act in the sense of these great truths, and in order to thy everlasting concerns to do all thou dost?

1 John 3. 9.

Is there a seed of immortality sown in thy spirit, and is it in a growing improving condition?

Do's that *spirit* of thine, being directed and assisted by the divine Spirit, manage thee in all thy business? do's it govern the operations of thy mind, and give law to all thy inferiour faculties? or do's it flag and hang the wing, and tamely give way to the sensual appetite, and suffer it self to be crow'd over by thy lusts and corruptions? And to this purpose, the better to try thy spirit,

2. In the next place, examin the inclinations of thy *soul*.

Dost thou find thy *will* readily to give her assent to the convictions of thy *understanding*, and kindly to imbrace that light, which is convey'd into thee by the *Spirit*? Which way do's her bias and *præpondium* sway her? How makes she her elections and choices, according to the dictates of the Spirit, or according to carnal suggestions?

In the wrestling and strife of the *flesh* and *spirit*, which side do's it take? which party do's it joyn it self to?

Do's it renounce the *flesh*, and follow the *spirit*, and being led by it is elevated and it self spiritualiz'd? or do's it consent to the *flesh*, and fall into earthly *concupiscences*, and degenerate into a sordid subjection to *sense* and brutish appetite?

Do's



Do's it chearfully entertain the imbraces of Divine love, and being impregnated by heavenly instincts, do's it bring forth *the fruits of the spirit*? or turning it self from God to the Creature do's it conceive with *lust*, and bring forth *sin* unto death?

James 1.15.

Do's it resist *temptations*, and stand out in the time of trial? or do's it upon easie terms surrender?

Do's it perfectly adhere to God, and give it self up fully to the guidance of the *Spirit*? or do's it grovel upon the earth, and immerse it self in the body, and go only as 'tis mov'd by *sense* and *passion*? Wherefore

3. In the last place, take thy *body*, thy *flesh*, into examination.

Are thy carnal *affections* rais'd heaven-ward, and possest with things above? Col. 3.2.

Hast thou of a truth the *fear* of God in thee? and do's it accompany thee into all thy privacies, where the eye of a man cannot reach thee?

Is he the great object and satisfaction of thy *love*? and canst thou be content to part with all for his sake?

Do'st thou take *delight* in him, in reading and hearing his word, in frequenting his House, in attending his Ordinances, and in doing his will, and keeping his commandments?

Do'st thou *hate* sin for sins sake? and art thou heartily displeas'd with thy self after the commission of any sin, under the sole apprehension of God's displeasure?

Do'st thou find at thy *devotions* and meditations that thy heart burns within thee, being set on fire with celestial flames of zeal?

On the contrary to all this, do thy *desires* stream forth in a full current to other objects, the profits, and pleasures, and preferments of this world, and take up with things here below? and art thou not led along with worldly *vanities*, the examples of the multitude, and the inticements of the *flesh*?

Do'st thou keep a guard upon thy bodily *senses*, that they may not be doors to let in the tempter?

Hast thou got a *seeing eye* and a *hearing ear*; that God's word may come with faith into thy heart? and are all thy senses exercised in spiritual things? Prov. 20.12. Hebr. 5.14.

Have thy eyes powr'd forth rivers of tears for thy sins, and been kept from beholding vanity? and hast thou been swift to hear, and slow to speak, slow to wrath. James 1. 19.

Or have thy *eyes* been full of adultery, and thy *ears* tickled with lascivious songs and idle stories, and thy *taste* made the caterer of thy intemperance, and procurer of thy lust? 2 Pet. 2. 14.

Hast thou yielded to the law in thy fleshly *members*, which warreth against the law of thy mind? or dost thou subdue and keep under thy body in *subjection*, that it may be serviceable to the purposes of thy soul, and that all thy *members* may be made *weapons of righteousness*. Rom. 7.23. 1 Cor. 9.27. Rom. 6.13.

In a word; has thy *spirit* been guided by the direction of God's Spirit; thy *will* inclined to a full compliance with his holy will, and thy outward man made conformable to thy inward man, being renewed with the renewing of the mind according to righteousness? Eph. 4.23.

If this great work be compleated in thee, *O happy thee!* that hast got thy head above the clouds, and like *Enoch*, walk'st with God, and hast thy

Phil. 3. 20. thy conversation in Heaven, filled with blessed assurances and foretastes of insuing joys and glories, being stedfast in *faith*, joyful through *hope*, and rooted in *charity*.

But if this *spiritual life* be but imperfectly begun in thee yet, and thou find'st the willingness of thy spirit is clogg'd and retarded by the weakness of thy flesh; be of good courage however, and apply that answer which 2 Cor. 12. 9. was given to S. Paul to thy self, that *God's grace is al sufficient for thee*; and make thy humble and constant addresses to God for the continual supplies thereof, which may assist thee to get the perfect victory over all thy corruptions.

Come to Christ by faith, in whose power thou shalt be able to do all things, and draw water out of the wells of salvation by thy diligent attendance upon his Ordinances. He will accept of thee with all thy imperfections, so there be but sincerity at the heart; nor will he *quench the smoking flax* of thy faint devotions, or *break the bruised reed* of thy contrite heart.

To come to an end; if it be so, that thou canst not put the condition of thy *soul* under either of these Heads; if thou art so far from having the work of grace *finis'd* in thee, that thou art not sure it has yet been so much as *begun*, or once offer'd at on thy part, but thou art utterly a stranger to the life of God: and 'tis to be fear'd, that such is the generality of Christians nowadays, that they content themselves with a bare outward formal *profession* of Christianity, but know nothing of the *power* of it, and are as far from saving knowledge, and as little acquainted with the work of grace, as if they had liv'd in the midst of Heathenism. Alas! if it be thus with thee, thou art in a sad woful state; thou art yet in thy sins, and *in the bond of iniquity*, and Christ has been preach'd to thee in vain, and thou hast pretended to believe in vain, and all that thou hast been doing, ever since thou wast born, has been done in vain, and comes to nothing.

Acts 8. 23.

Thou maist go, *poor soul*, under the name of a Christian, but thou art very far from the thing.

Thou hast worn out the character of thy *baptism*, which intitled thee to Christianity, and hast forfeited the grace promised to thee in that Sacrament, by not performing thy own Vows which thou madest to God at the time of thy admission into his Church.

Thou hast been an idle careless hearer of the *Word* of God, and as soon as thou hast heard it, hast flung it behind thy back.

Thou hast been negligent and remiss in the *duties* of thy life, and hast not endeavoured to acquaint thy self with God, or with thy self in private.

And if at any time thou hast come to the *Lord's Supper*, which is the highest and most mysterious way of communicating with God, thou having come out of custom, or some by-respect, without due preparation, hast met with no benefit, carried away no comfort in the soul of thee, but hast found the blessed Sacrament to have been to thee no more then the bare Elements and outward signs, without the inward invisible grace, and hast not discern'd the Lord's Body, and hast reputed the blood of the Covenant to be a common thing.

Hebr. 10. 29.

What shall I say to thee, *poor soul*, in such a case? shall I discourage thee from coming to hear the *Word* preach'd, from receiving the *Sacrament*?

ment? No; by no means. There's no body wants them more then thou do'st. They are the appointed *means of grace*, and there's no promise of obtaining grace any other way; and thou, poor graceless soul, art as yet utterly void of grace.

O do *thou* then, to be sure, apply thy self upon all occasions. Whatever others do, do not *thou* neglect any opportunity of publick prayers, of good discourses, of the holy Communion.

'Tis true; as thou art, these things can do thee little good. But however, seek God while he may be found. Who knows when that *acceptable time* may be? Seek him, and he will be found.

Psal. 32. 6.

Psal. 69. 13.

God has been long a seeking thee, and if thou resolvest to be found of him, thou must let thy self in his way. Come to *Church*, come to *Sacrament*, there thou art in his ready way; he cannot miss thee.

Humble thy self under the sense of thy ignorance, and dulness, and weakness, and wickedness, and spiritual deadness of heart; and when thou hast emptied thy self of thy self, then thou shalt receive of his fullness, and grace for grace.

John 1. 16.

1 Thes. 5. 23.

Now may the very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God, your spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

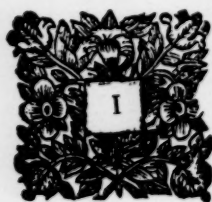


## Of the Tryal of Sincerity.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* before the  
Family, *March 2. 167 $\frac{2}{3}$ .*

Eph. VI. xxvi.

*Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ  
in sincerity. Amen.*



**I**t is the blessed *Apostle's* constant Custom in his Writings to begin and end with good wishes, with appreciations of grace, and peace, and mercy, and love, upon those he writes to. Thus here drawing to a conclusion, having finished the doctrinal and moral parts of the *Epistle*, and said as much as was convenient for their instruction in *Faith*, and their direction in *Præctice*, he closes all with a hearty and affectionate

*Wish* in the foregoing verse; *Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.* And then from the consideration of that love of God to us in *Christ*, that there's a love to be return'd by us to the Lord *Jesus*, and that love to be made out in all sincerity and incorruption, it will be most certain that *Grace* will attend us. *Grace be, or will be with all them, &c.* i. e. may ever the favour of God, and all blessings of this life, and that which is to come, go along with all such persons, as have a true and worthy Esteem, and a cordial and sincere Affection for their blessed Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*.

The Words contain in them *three Parts*, and will afford us as many *Observations*.

1. A Duty recommended; *to love the Lord Jesus Christ.*
2. The Qualification of it; it must be *in sincerity.*
3. The Result and happy Consequence of it; *Grace be with them all.*

The *Observations* are these.

1. That the Lord *Jesus Christ* ought to be the great and only object of a *Christians* love, or that The great duty of a *Christian* is the love of his Master.
2. That the sincerity of this love is the very complement and character of all *Christian* perfection.
3. That this sincere love of *Christ*, as it is a certain sign and evidence of grace in a *Christian*, so 'tis always accompanied with the grace and blessing of God.

The

The first Proposition, that *the love of the holy Jesus is the great duty of every Christian*, might be made out at large from the consideration

Of his *Person*; in its dignity and excellence, as being invested with extraordinary *graces* and heavenly *glories*; in the neer *relation* he stands in to us, being flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, in every thing made like unto us, sin only excepted; and in the kind *undertakings* and signal *exploits* of his dearest *love*, to our greatest advantage, in his *active* and *passive* obedience. Hebr. 2. 17.

Of his *Offices*; whether in *general*, as he was the alone *Mediator* and the great *Apostle*; or in *particular*, as our *King*, *Priest*, and *Prophet*, by which characters he was enabled to purchase redemption for us.

And of his *Ordinances*, the *Word* and *Sacraments*, and other *Institutions* of his Church, which he has appointed as effectual *means* of *grace*, whereby we may work out our own salvation.

All these are great *Incentives*, high *Incouragements* and *Indearments* of our most affectionate love to him, who has loved us so much.

But I shall not now insist upon these in such a Christian assembly as this, where I doubt not but every pious soul, if it were asked the same question as *Christ* put to *Peter*, *Simon lovest thou me?* would readily return the same answer as *Peter* did; *Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.* John 21. 17.

I pass then to my second Observation: That *Christian perfection consists in our sincerity*. That's the *top-stone* and the *touch-stone*; that which compleats and makes up our spiritual state; and that by which it is to be tried and judg'd of. That which goes through all duties of life, all parts of Christianity, all gifts and graces of the holy Spirit, influences and virtuates them all, and makes them all truly serviceable to their several ends, and acceptable to God.

Wherefore, that we may arrive at some Knowledge of what so nearly concerns us, in making a right judgment of our present *state* and future *hopes*, 'tis not amiss for us to enlarge our inquiries. And I shall pursue this Subject in this *method*, and confine my discourse to these *stages*.

1. To shew the *importance* and true *meaning* of the word according to its various acceptation in Scripture-use: What's meant by *sincerity* or being sincere.

2. To inquire into the *grounds* and *nature* of the thing it self, wherein this grace of *sincerity* consists, and whereupon 'tis bottomed.

3. Since this grace is the *κρῖσις*, the character and touch-stone of all other graces, by which they are to be tried; to set down some *Marks* by which it self may be brought to the test, and pass its trial.

I. For the *notion* of the *Word*; in the *Old Testament* there's but one generally made use of to express it, *צדק* which signifies *perfection*: in the *New* there are several, at least a dozen.

I shall not trouble you with a collection of them, but, because I would hasten to that which is more practical, shall reduce them all briefly to these *four heads*.

1. Soundness of *opinion* and *doctrine* in the right principles of true Religion.

2. Purity of *life* and *practice*, in an unblameable conversation.
3. Uprightneis of *intention*, in the simplicity of our hearts and meanings.

4. Reality of *kindneß* in an unfeigned affection.

And these we might at large prove as well by *reason*, as by *Scripture*, to be all four necessary to make up a Christian compleat and perfect in *sincerity*; and that no one or more of them is sufficient, unless they be all present.

We come therefore in the next place to find out the *bottom* whereon this grace stands; and that is mainly threefold, at least in three distinct notions.

1. A blessed Union of *Spirit*.
2. A holy Compliance of *will*.
3. A perfect satisfaction and acquiescence of *mind*.

And these three represented by three similitudes.

Of the *Vine* and *Branches*.

Of a *Husband* and *Wife*.

Of the *Head* and the *Members*.

1. *Unity of Spirit*. This is that which unites *Father* and *Son* betwixt themselves, and must unite us to both, and among one another. Hereupon 'tis called the *communion* or fellowship of the Holy Ghost. Eph. 4. 4. *There is one body and one spirit*. Love implies this: *Anima est ubi amat*. This upon the very account of *friendship*, which makes *one* soul in two bodies. Luke 9. 55. *Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of*, says Christ; and the Apostle tells us, Rom. 8. 9. *If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his*.

It was that which united the two Natures; hence *Christ* is said to have been *conceived of the Holy Ghost*; not that he was begotten of him, for then he had been his Son, but that he sanctified the *human* nature, and joyn'd it to the *divine*. Now that which united our nature to *Christ's* person, must unite us to him too.

- This is when we draw life from him as the *root*, in whom our *life* is bid. Col. 3. 3. For he's the *Vine*, and we the *Branches*. John 15. 5. Art thou transplanted then? Art thou taken off from the stock of corrupt nature, the *wild olive*, and ingrafted into Christ? Rom. 11. 24.

- How's that? The *Cyon* or graff, ye know, is a stranger at first to the tree 'tis inoculated into. Till it be united, as it were, in spirit; there's no life, no fruit, till sap and juyce be derived to it from the stock. John 15. 5. *Without me*, says Christ, *ye can do nothing*.

- When this is once done, then a man is a *sincere Christian*, he's all of a piece with his Christ. He and Christ are one, as the Father and He are one, *i. e.* by the same Spirit. If we are thus implanted into him, and grow up in him; as long as there's any sap at *root*, as long as there's virtue in *Christ*, a man shall never miscarry; but then we must take heed of *breaking off* our selves by *unbelief*. John 17. 11. Rom. 11. 20.

2. *Compliance of will*; when our thoughts and desires concenter with his. There must be a mutual *sympathy* and concern, as in Motion of consent. This is the very *Motto* of love and friendship; *Idem velle atque idem nolle*, says *Sallust*; to will and nill the same thing.



Hast thou then yielded thy self up to the obedience, as well as to the assurance of faith? Dost thou believe precepts alike as promises? and canst thou say, as the Psalmist do's, that his commandments are thy delight? Rom. 1. 5. Psal. 119. 143.

Thus we stand related to Christ, as a Wife to her Husband, whose love is to be made out in her obedience. The greatest endearments are express in mutual condescensions. How infinite have the condescensions of his love been towards us! where are ours towards him? He denied and emptied himself of glory first, then of life for our sakes; where's our self-denial for his? He that will be a Disciple of Christ, must deny himself. That's the first Lesson to be learnt. Math. 16. 24.

We cannot pretend to be of one spirit with him, unless we be of one will; when what pleaseth him, pleaseth us. Now if our will run counter to his, this is a sign our love is but dissimbled, 'tis but a counterfeit love. Where sincerity is, there will be a ready submission to his will in sufferings, and a cheerful obedience to his will in actings. When with all willingness thou canst do and suffer, what thou knowest is his mind and will thou shouldst, this is compliance; and not grudgingly neither, or as of necessity, but freely, as if it were thy own will as much as his.

3. A perfect Acquiescence and Complacency in him. 'Tis an usual distinction, a love of Concupiscence, and a love of Benevolence. That's grounded upon Interest, and is indeed the love of our selves when we love a thing for our own sake, though that be allow'd too; for if a man be wise, 'tis for himself, he hath the profit and benefit of it. But our love to Christ, if it be sincere and genuine, must proceed from affection and kindness to himself. Job 22. 2.

Canst thou then roll thy self upon him, and repose all thy confidences in him, and say, Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there's nothing on earth, that I desire in comparison of thee. Neither Saint, nor Angel, nor Father nor Mother, nor life nor limb so dear to the soul of me as He is. No concern, no enjoyment sits so close to my heart as He do's. Without him all other satisfactions are insipid and insignificant; and if I have him, I want nothing. When there's such a disposition, such a resolution, this is sincerity. Psal. 37. 5. Psal. 73. 25.

And this is that which is set forth by the Head and its Members, compacted together with joints and bands. This Acquiescence is that which Health is in the body; when all the members drawing virtue from the head, are rejoiced in one another's welfare. Col. 2. 19.

And consider we what reason we have to be perfectly satisfied in him, who has made perfect satisfaction for us. The sense of that pardon, which he has procur'd for us, sets the conscience at rest; and how easie is a man, when his conscience is appeased and at quiet within him? This sweetens, as well as sanctifies, all other comforts, all conditions; nothing relishes without it. When the main chance is secured, smaller matters are not so apt to trouble us.

Do we look upon Him then as our chiefest good, that influences all our other enjoyments, as the one thing necessary, in comparison of whom all things else, be they what they will, honours, estates, profits and pleasures, nay Church-priviledges and the ordinances themselves, unless we meet with him in them, import nothing of real advantage, nothing wherein our soul can take true delight and solid satisfaction? Luke 10. 42.

III. The *Marks* by which our *sincerity* is to be tried, which are these :

1. As to the *Principle* and reason of our love ; that it be *Absolute*, for his own sake, and not for By-ends.

2. As to the *Object* of it ; that it be *Universal* and *Impartial*, all over, in his Person, in his Offices, and in his Ordinances.

3. As to the *Subject* of it ; that it be *Compleat*, with the whole heart.

*First* ; To affect him *absolutely*, for his own sake ; not for by-respects and unworthy ends ; not for *carnal* reasons and *worldly* advantages. For upon such accounts it will not prove it self to be a *judicious* love , a love of choice ; not a *conscientious* love, a love springing from devotion.

Examin then, *whether* this love of thine be terminated upon himself. Otherwise if it be *transient* only, and thou takest him in by the way, thou do'st not dwell in him by love ; but when thy *ends* and *designs* , which thou hast upon him fail, thy *love* will decay too. Thou makest him but the *Idol*, and intendest thy worship to thy *self*, setting up thy self for thy God, and making him only a pretence, Πάτερ μου πρόσθεν.

It must not arise then from such slight *considerations* as these.

1. Not out of *formality* and *custom*, for shew and fashion sake, because others do so. 'Tis well, people do so ; for though we are not to run with a multitude to sin, yet the *Psalmist* professeth a joy in going to Church *with the multitude of them that keep holy day*. But this is not enough.

Alas ! this is but the shell of Religion, to have the *form* only, and deny the *power* thereof. *Form* is necessary , but signifies nothing without the *power*.

Good *customs* are laudable, but to do even good things out of meer custom, is not good ; that is, when they are done, not because they are good, but only because *customary*.

This is a vulgar error, to sit down with their Religion upon such easie terms. God complains of these *formalities* , they come before me as my people, *draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me*.

2. Not from the force of *education*, or out of obedience to the *Laws* of the Country ; because we have been bred and born Christians ; and the Civil powers, under which we live, own and incourage Christian profession.

'Tis happy for us 'tis so ; else what had become of many, of most of us, who otherwise had been as capable of any other impression, to have been *Papists* or *Turks* ?

But if this be all, our case is little better then theirs ; for though we may have more *light* of *knowledge*, I cannot say we have much more *heat* of *love*. Their education and Laws have betray'd them to what they are ; and ours have alike made us what we are. Where lies the difference, if this be all ?

Hast thou improved thy *education* by thy own *reason* ? and do'st thou obey the *Laws* of thy Country out of *conscience* to thy God ?

'Tis

'Tis a good thing sure, to be rightly principled in ones youth, to have ones younger years season'd with early devotion; but then, as in *baptism*, when thou comest of age, thou art to take it upon thy self, else thou takest Christ but upon trust.

'Tis a blest advantage, no question, to be born within the pale of the Church, within the sound and light of the Gospel, to have Religion secur'd and recommended by *Laws*, and Christianity countenanced by the Government. But then, if thou imbracest Christ only for the Laws sake, that will not serve. *His servants ye are*, says the Apostle, *to whom ye obey*. 'Tis not Christ in this case, but the *Magistrate*, thou payest thy duty to; nor is it *serving the Lord*, but (as some Copies read *κατὰ τὸν χρόνον*) *serving the time*. 'This may be the Religion of a *Leviathan*, but not of a true *sincere Christian*. Rom. 6. 16.  
Rom. 12. 11.

3. Not out of *interest* and worldly profit. For thus thou invertest the Apostles saying; *Godliness is great gain*, and makest gain thy godliness. 1 Tim. 6. 6. In *Halcyonian* days the Gospel has many followers, when they may get by it. Christ himself observ'd the multitudes throng'd after him more for the *loaves*, then for his *doctrine*. Few love Christ *gratis*, but to make advantage by him. The Devil knew this too well, and charges *Job* with it; *Do's Job serve God for nought?* John 6. 26.  
Job 1. 9.

I have reason to be confident, that our divisions now, wherein every *Party* pretends to be more pure and strict then other, are mainly carried on to this mean purpose for management of interest and procuring of gain; and the *teachers* themselves, that head the parties, find the sweet of it, getting more by this means, then if they were put into parochial cures and legal establishments.

But this is to *mammonize* Christ, and to make him a *Factor* for our own paltry turns.

4. Not out of *credit* and *reputation*. Blessed be God, that *Religion*, that *Christ* is of such esteem amongst us! Thus, if a man did not at least pretend to religion, he would be look'd on as an *Atheist*, and his company would not be accepted perhaps amongst vertuous and fashionable people.

I would it were so, that those bold ones might find discouragement even from this, that their profaneness would procure them a publick disesteem. If it were but thus with us, if pious and sober persons would take all occasions to give check to such insolent spirits, there would not that dishonour be done to Christ as peradventure is.

But were it so; this might indeed hinder the outward unkindnesses and affronts which are too frequently offer'd to Religion, but not contribute much (if this were all) to inward *sincerity*.

5. Lastly; Not out of that *pleasure* and self-satisfaction, which either *naturally* or *accidentally* may flow from spiritual exercises and holy attendances.

First *natural conscience*, as it is extremely dissatisfied in the utter neglect of its duty, so 'tis apt to be highly pleas'd in the overt and perfunctory discharge of it. For every man is by meer instinct of nature convinced of his obligations; and thereupon we are too prone to content our selves with any slubberly performance, as may serve in some measure to quiet conscience, and to rebate her checks; and to serve God only for our own ease, to allay the troubles of a guilty mind, which would otherwise molest us,

But



But this at best amounts but to a *natural religion*, such as *Historians* tell us, is observable, in other creatures, as well as men. At furthest, 'tis to worship *Christ*, as poor *Heathens* worship their *Pagods*, not out of *love*, but *fear* of some invisible powers, be it but their own apprehensions.

Eph. 5. 19.

Again, there's another sort of *delight* and even sensual satisfaction in spiritual duties, *praying, hearing, meditating, singing of Psalms*, and the like. As for instance; if the fluency of utterance, and the pathetic vehemence us'd in the delivery, and not the matter of the *Prayer* stir up thy affections; if thou art taken with a *Sermon*, not as 'tis the word of *Christ*, but for the eloquence of the Man, with quaint expressions or affected tones; if *singing* tickles thy ear, and causes no devotion in the mind, makes no *melody in thy heart*: This is no *sincere* performance of religious duties, and 'tis a sign thou frequentest these exercises only to gratifie an extravagant pleasure of thine own, not with any real intention of serving God, or expressing thy love to *Christ* in them.

In a word; he that sets up his rest in the *Ordinances* themselves, without due regard had to *Christ* as the Appointer, and as the main Subject of them, makes Idols of the *Ordinances*, and instead of shewing an acceptable affection to *Christ*, provokes him to jealousy with his own *Institutions*.

So then, there are none of these *sorts* will abide the test; none of them that must pass for *sincerity*. And to try, *whether thy love to Christ* be not grounded upon *interest, reputation*, or some *carnal* satisfaction; *whether thy respects to him* do not stand upon a *formal* or a *customary*, at least upon a *moral* or a *civil* bottom; because thou hast been so instructed by thy Parents, or art so commanded by thy Governours; take thy self to task, and examin,

*Whether* if Christianity should grow a thing out of fashion, thou wouldst continue thy regards to *Christ* still, and retain a profession that were grown *ridiculous*, like our Ancestours habits; and wouldst still come to *Church*, and keep her solemnities, though there were no multitude to bear thee company?

*Whether* thou dost virtuate the *form* of religion with the *power* of piety; seeing that as the *form* is prudentially necessary for the government of the Church and publick order, so the *power* is more indispensably necessary for the salvation of thy soul?

2 Pet. 3. 15.

*Whether* thou owest not thy religion to thy *Forefathers* or to thy *Country*, and art content in a blind compliance to walk in the road, the *King's High-way*, without using thy own eyes? or *whether* thou art able to give thy self a *reason of that hope* which is in thee, and not only out of honour to *antiquity*, and obedience to *authority*, but out of pure judgment imbracest the truth, and canst justify the pious prepossessions of thy youth, and the wholesome Laws of the Land against gainfayers, and art resolv'd to adhere to thy *profession*, though all the world were against it?

John 19. 26.

*Whether* thou couldst be content to follow *Christ* in *storms* and *wracks*, as well as in *sunshine* and *prosperity*; as well pleased to accompany him into the *desert*, or to wait upon him along the *dolourous way*, and with his blessed Mother and beloved Disciple attend thy persecuted Saviour to his sufferings on the *Cross*; as to bear him company in the *Garden of Spices*, and to satisfy thy self with his love among the clusters

clusters of *Engaddi* in the affluence of temporal enjoyments?

Cant. 1. 14.

*Whether*, if thou hadst no witness of thy devotions; or if Religion should in licentious times come to be look'd on as a despicable thing, thou couldst serve *Christ* (as his *Apostle* did) in honour and dishonour?

2 Cor. 6. 3.

*Whether* thou art not satisfied in the work it self done, and entertain'st thy self only with some *sensual* pleasures and *circumstantial* delights in thy religious performances? or, were there none of those outward *divertisements*, all other satisfactions laid aside, couldst be ravished with his love, though the *charmer*, I mean the Preacher, charm'd never so unwisely; and raise thy affections, *praying with the spirit* under the plainest forms, and *hearing with the spirit* under the meanest discourses, and canst with a single eye look upon *Christ* alone in all his ordinances, as the ground of thy *satisfaction*, and the reason of thy love?

Isa. 53. 5.

In a word, *whether* thou dost so acquiesce in thy Saviour's love, that having him thou canst resolve thou wantest nothing, and dost so heartily love him for his own sake, as to abstract from thy carnal self; and art abundantly well pleas'd in his service, though thou shouldst get nothing at all by it in this world?

This is a true *Christian love* indeed, this a generous and *sincere* affection. Those others are but for *by-ends* and sorry advantages, which will turn to no account, as not being grounded upon *judgment* or *conscience*. For the *sincerity* of love requires, that it be both *judicious* as to choice, and *consciencious* as to obligation.

First, *Judgment* is to be form'd upon fair debates of reason, and full convictions of experience.

*Hast thou* reason'd and debated the thing with thy self? hast thou consider'd the *excellencies* and *dignities* of his *Person*, his *graces*, and his *glories*, his high love and his deep *condescensions*? and has thy *understanding* concluded him amiable, and propos'd him to thy *affections* as the darling of thy heart, the very soul of thy soul?

*Hast thou* inquired into the nature and necessity of his *offices*; and findest there was no other way, God could so wonderfully and so graciously have brought such mighty things to pass for thee, but by sending his Son as he did?

*Hast thou* applied thy self to the *ordinances*, and there met with the Spirit of *Christ*, deriving vertue from him into thy prostrate soul?

And *hast thou* experimented these things to the utmost of *conviction*, till thou hast been wrought upon, prevailed with, and fully perswaded, and even *constrained* to ingage thy heart to the love of him, who has loved thee from the heights of Heaven, to the depths of Hell; having descended from one place to redeem thee from the other?

2 Cor. 5. 14.

*Oh!* if it hath ever been thus with thee, *dear Christian*, then in the next place study thy *obligations*. Look into thy *conscience*, and see what Counterpart thou findest there of all his love to thee in thy loving him again.

*Dost thou* find it deeply imprinted on thy *affections*, and dost thou in legible characters express those affections to the life in thy *actions*?

If it be so, that thy love to *Christ* is thus *judiciously* and *conscienciously* ingaged, thou maist in all probability assure thy self of its *sincerity*.

That's the *first Mark*: I shall be brief in the rest.

The *second* is, that as this *Love* must be *absolute* and abstracted from all *by-ends*, so it must be *universal* and *impartial*, to love him all over, in all his Capacities, in all his Relations, in all his Concerns. For that's the nature of true *love*, to co-extend it self with its beloved *object*, to every thing that belongs to it.

To gather it into some few *Inquiries* for trial.

Haſt thou a like reſpect and affection for *Chriſt* in all his *offices*, *ordinances* and *methods* of dealing? and doſt not out of partial regards prefer one to another?

Art thou convinced, that his *Kingship* is as neceſſary for the govern-ance of thy *heart* and *life*, as his *Prieſthood* was for the expiation of thy *sins*, or his *Prophetick* function is for enlightning thy *ignorance*? or doſt thou ſo highly value him for being the great *Prophet*, that thou neglecteſt him in his other two imployes?

Doſt thou prize the *Sacraments*, as the Seals of the Covenant, no leſs than the *Word*, which is the declaration of it? and do's the *Word* it ſelf better pleaſe thee, as it came from *God*, and is handed to thee by the *Church*, then as it is ſet out with the głoſſes of *Men*; and for *theſe*, whom *Chriſt* has appointed to expound it, doſt thou honour them ſo far, as *Chriſt's officers*, alike, and that for the *words* ſake, and not the word for theirs, *having mens perſons in admiration*?

Jude 16.

Doſt thou freely and willingly ſubmit to all the adminiſtrations of his *providence*, to all the diſpenſations of his *grace*?

Pſal. 23. 4.  
Job 2. 10.

Doſt thou find comfort by his *rod* as well as by his *ſtaff*? and canſt thou with *Job* receive *evil* at his hand as well as *good*?

Doſt thy faith cleave faſt to him in both his *eſtates*; and are the ſur-prizes of thy *wonder*, and the raviſhments of thy *love* equally excited, when thou ſeeſt him hanging on the tree, a *crucified God*, and when thou beholdeſt him ſitting at the right hand of the Father, a *glorified Man*?

Art thou perſwaded, out of that honour thou haſt for *Chriſt* himſelf, to ſhew a reverend regard to his Spouſe the *Church*, and to pay a ready obedience to her *Rules* and *Inſtitutions* in thoſe things, wherein *Chriſt* himſelf hath left no expreſs order, and that thou oughteſt not to make a rent in his *body*, ſeeing the Souldiers durſt not attempt it on his *coat*?

John 19. 24.  
1 Pet. 2. 17.

Doſt thou love the *brotherhood*, all thy fellow-members of that myſtical body, whereof *Chriſt* is head? and by thy liberality to the *Church*, and charity to the *poor*, evidence that the love of *God* dwelleth in thee?

This is a further fair ſign of thy *sincerity*.

But then in the *third* and laſt place, this *love* of thine to make it perfectly and compleatly *sincere*, as it ought to be *universal* to all the Con-cerns of *Chriſt*, ſo it muſt be no leſs *universal* as to *thy own*. Thou art to love him all over *himſelf*, and to love him all over *thy own ſelf* too, with the ingagement of thy whole Heart, and a perfect ſubmiſſion of all thy Concerns to him. Whole *Chriſt* is to be loved, and to be loved with whole *ſelf*. Thou muſt give *all* for him, or thou giv'eſt nothing at all.

Remember, *pious ſoul*, that he is thy *King* and thy *Spouſe*, whom thou pretend'eſt to; and *Majeſty* and *Love* admit of no Competitor in their claim, no Cor rival in thy affections.

He



He is to be loved so *above all* and *beyond all*, that thou art to love nothing *besides him*.

Thus in the old Law, the *Decalogue* begins, *Thou shalt have no other Gods but me*; no other *coram me*, before me, no other *præter me*, besides me. *Before* or *beside* is an affront to the *Lord thy God*, who brought thee, who bought thee; who made thee, who redeemed thee.

And thus *He himself*, by whom God spoke to the world last, tells us; *Hebr. 1. 2.* *He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me*; so *Matth. 10. 37.* says one of the sacred *Historians*, that reports his words; but the other goes further, and strikes on a deeper key; *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, &c. he cannot be my Disciple.* *Luke 14. 26.*

Why? *blessed Saviour*, thou that camest not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it, wouldst thou have us, contrary to the Laws of God and Man, and the obligations of nature, to hate our parents, that have given us our being and maintenance, and among the rest of their kindnesses, have brought us to some knowledge of thy self by a virtuous and Christian education, to make them so sorry a return for all their love, as to hate them at last?

No: Not to hate them. I: but to love me so much, that the highest esteem and dearest affection you have to the nearest relations, and the most important concerns in the world, in comparison of that love you have for me, shall appear in so faint a degree, that 'twill look like stark *hated* rather than love; and further, that that very love you have for them, if it should so chance, as it may, that it be inconsistent with mine, that then you utterly renounce and disclaim it.

Now, dear *Saviour*, my understanding opens; now I begin to conceive thy meaning, thy blessed *Apostle* having gone before me, and read my lesson to my hand, where professing the infinite value he has for thee, he saith, *he accounts all things else but dung, οὐκ ἀρα, dogs-meat.* *Phil. 3. 8.*

Farewel then profit, pleasure, and preferment. Farewel friends and kindred, Lands and Livings and Life and all. Adieu to the world, and to the flesh, and to self too; I have more then all you can give me, more then you all can promise, in my *Christ* alone.

So then interest, reputation, all whatever satisfactions else, parents, friends, all whatsoever other laudable objects of thy affections are to give way, and to quit the place, when the everlasting doors of thy heart are to be lifted up, that the *King of glory* may come in. *Psalm 24. 7.*

I have shew'd in the first Mark of trial, that the love of *Christ* is not to be subordinate to these mean considerations: I am now telling you, that it cannot be so much as coordinate or compatible with them. It was *Alexander's* saying, that Nature could not admit of two Suns, nor the World of two Monarchs; nor will *Christ*, the Sun of Righteousness, the King of glory be divided, and put to his share with copartners.

Bring thy sincerity to the test then.

Hast thou such a love for *Christ*, that thou art fully satisfied, as enjoying all things in him, and needing nothing from without, nothing besides him, to render thee truly happy?

Dost thou esteem thy relation thou hast to him, that high and heavenly calling of being a *Christian*, more honourable, then all the Titles and Dignities in the world can make thee? *Phil. 3. 14.* *Hebr. 3. 1.*

Do those riches of grace and treasures of wisdom which are hidden in *Christ*, yet discovered to thee, satiate thy covetous desires beyond all the wealth of the two Indies, all that lies in the depths of the Sea, or the bowels of the earth? *Col. 2. 3.*

*Dost thou find that ravishing content, those extatical pleasures, in the injoyment of thy Jesus's love, as fond Voluptuaries look for, but find not, imagin, but never meet with, in the caresses and imbraces of their most dearly beloved lusts, in the most exquisite treatments of their sensual and carnal appetites?*

Further; what of this worlds conveniences and comforts God hath allowed thee, *dost thou* so look upon them, so use them, as *not to set thy heart upon them*, and only give them their value from thy Master's love, whose further kindness it was to bestow them upon thee; that he might distinguish thee even in thy *temporals*, as well as in thy *spirituals*, from others, who want those blessings thou hast?

*Dost thou value thy honour, thy estate, thy abundance of all good things only for this, that they are advantages to thee of bringing more honour to God, and of making thee rich in good works?*

To conclude; *dost thou* find thy self so *dispos'd*, so *resolved*, if not upon voluntary choice to relinquish all for his sake, to *sell all and give to the poor*; yet, if he should call, or his service so require, then freely to part with all, and chearfully to lay thy *wealth* and *honour*, and all thy secular advantages down at the foot of *his Cross*, and so take up thy own cross and follow him?

*Canst thou* find in thy heart, as willingly to *suffer* with him, as thou desirest to *reign* with him?

*Couldst thou* be contented to strip thy self of all thy outward comforts, and live upon thy *faith*, and say that *thy life is hid in Christ*; and when all's gone, and he alone left, *couldst thou* be satisfied, that he's more to thee than all the *fathers* and *mothers* and *brothers* and *sisters*, then all the *houses* and *lands*, all the *treasures* and *pleasures* in the world can be to thee; and that the worst of conditions that can befall thee with him, be it never so scanty, never so mean, is infinitely preferable before the most glorious and plentiful estate that ever *Solomon* or *Craesus* were in?

If it be thus with thee, if thou canst bear these *touches* and *trials* of thy *love*, 'tis a fair concluding evidence of thy *sincerity*. And thus much of the *second Observation*.

I shall trespass but three or four minutes longer upon your patience, whilst I do but mention the *Third*.

That *this Sincerity of Love*, as it is a certain evidence of *Grace* in a *Christian*, so 'tis always accompanied with the *Grace* and *favour* of *God*.

The *former* part of the *Proposition* hath already been made good. For, if those *four* things I mention'd are requisite to make up *sincerity*, certainly that man who has a *sound Head*, has taken in right principles of Christian Knowledge, and is *sound at heart*, has an upright and single intention; and is of *pure hands*, and of an innocent and unblameable conversation; and is of *ardent affections* and unwearied devotions towards his Lord and Saviour: Again, he who is *united in spirit* to Christ, *complies in will* with him, and *hath his satisfactions taken up* with him: and further, he who *loves him absolutely, impartially, and universally*: assuredly this man is a *gracious* man, this man must needs have the *grace of God* in him.

As to the *later* part, I shall not now stand to prove it by *argument*, but rather, as the *Apostle* here takes leave of his *Ephesians*, draw it up in the full importance of the notion of *grace*, which comprehends in it all manner

manner of blessings, by way of *apprecation*, as here 'tis exprest, into a short and hearty *Wish*,

That God's peculiar Grace, *dearly beloved Christians*, may ever accompany you, as many of you, as do thus *in sincerity* love our Lord *Jesus*; and that his favours and blessings, both temporal and spiritual, may at all times, and in all places, constantly attend you.

May his *grace* guide and govern you; may his *providence* protect and preserve you, through all the chances and changes of this life.

May he, together with *Christ* freely give you all things, and grant you Rom. 8. 32. all your hearts desire.

In a word; may he with-hold no *good* thing from you, and keep you from all *evil*, from sin and temptation, from danger and distress. Psal. 84. 11.

May he sanctifie all *conditions* to you, and make *all things* work together for your good. Rom 8. 28.

May he make you alway profitable Hearers of his holy *Word*, and comfortable Partakers of his blessed *Sacrament*.

May he give you length of days, that you may see your Childrens Psal. 118. 6. children, and peace upon *Israel*.

May he grant you holy and happy *lives*, and quiet and blessed *deaths*; and when the appointed time of your change shall come, may he fill you with the heavenly consolations, *peace of conscience*, and *joy in the holy Ghost*, and in the sense of his *love* and your *pardon*, afford you a blessed *prospect*, and a gracious *foretast* here of those endless *joys* and unconceivable *glories*, which your *dear Saviour*, who has been the desire of your souls, has purchased for you, to whom, the *Eternal Son* of God, together with *Father* and blessed *Spirit*, be all honour and glory now and for ever. *Amen*.

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## Of the Unity of the Spirit.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* in the Lent-Course, *March 10. 1675.*

Eph. IV. iii.

*Endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*



**T**HAT our *Divisions*, whether we look upon the sinfulness or the mischievousness of them, are none of the least of those evils, for which the Nation ought to put on sack-cloth, and strow ashes upon her head, to humble herself, to take up a lamentation, and to deplore those dismal consequences, which usually attend such distempers; is so obvious a truth, as no one can pretend not to see, who do's not either want or shut his eyes.

'Tis but late indeed that *Rebellion* and *Schism*, those twin-Sisters, that alway covenant and ingage for one anothers mutual defense, have been brought into our *Litany*: Our late experience, who have seen a flourishing *Church* and *State* in ruins, having taught us sufficiently how necessary 'tis for us, even in our most solemn humiliations, if we have any duty for Government, any kindness for our selves and our posterities after us, to pray to a good God to deliver us from them.

I shall not now proceed with bemoaning language to bewail the distractions of our *English Sion*; much less by aggravating our dangers to exasperate our distempers; but shall rather choose, in a calmer way of reasoning, to apply some *Malagma*, some gentle emollient medicine by endeavouring to make out that obligation, which lies upon us all, as *Christians*, of whatever persuasion, to preserve the *Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*.

In the menage of which Argument, I shall (to make our method more clear) insist upon these Heads.

1. Upon what account this *Unity* here is attributed to the *Spirit*.
2. Wherein this *Unity of the Spirit* consists.
3. What is meant by the *keeping it in the bond of peace*. And then
4. In the last place, I shall briefly lay down some Reasons, why we should endeavour to keep this *Unity and peace*; and some Helps or Means, how we may most likely effect those our endeavours.

I. Then

Then the *Spirit* is intitled to this *Unity*, both in respect of his *Person*, as to the Godhead; and of his *Office*, as to the Church.

1.

1. The holy *Spirit*, by whose blessed assistances the Church of Christ in all her officers and members is continually to be supported and kept up; is, in the very nature of his *Personal subsistence*, that principle of *Unity*, that Cement of Love, by which the *three Persons* themselves of the glorious and undivided *Trinity*, are inseparably and coeternally united together, and linked in mutual unspeakable joys and kindnesses, and in the most affectionate Indearments to one another.

For no sooner (pardon an expression of *Time*, where I am speaking of *Eternity*; 'tis hard for our finite conceptions to express themselves otherwise; no sooner) had the infinite *Understanding*, with a complacency and satisfaction no less infinite than it self, begotten the *Word*, the immediate Product of the divine Intellect, with vigorous delights reflecting upon it self: no sooner (I say) had the Eternal *Father* begotten the *Son* Coessential, and consequently Coeternal with himself, but at the very same instant of nature, after an ineffable manner, there proceeded and issued from them both the *Holy Ghost*, as *amoris vinculum*, the bond of reciprocal love, by which *Father* and *Son* are intimately and indissolubly tied one to another, and the *third Person*, which joyns the other two together, himself closely united to both; so that the *Three-One God*, though distinguished into different ways of subsisting (which in regard of their several personal capacities do constitute and denominate them three, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*) yet they remain still undivided in the *Unity of the Deity*, which, in respect of their essential glories, and the communications of love, makes them to be but one Eternal, Almighty, Incomprehensible God.

This *love*, which thus unites the *Persons* among themselves, is so proper and natural to the Godhead, so necessary to the very being and notion of God, that we may in S. *John's* divinity term it his Essence; for so he seems to say, where he says, *God is love*.

1 John 4.8.

What could have been said more gloriously and to higher advantage of *love*? what more graciously and with greater kindness of *God*? then to make *God* and *love* to be all one; that *love*, by which the *three Persons* among themselves were coeternally united into one; and that *love*, by which *God* from all Eternity purpos'd with himself to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on Earth, even in him, as 'tis Chap. 1. of this Epistle, verse 19.

And this is that our Blessed Lord himself, who came out of the Bosom of the Father, to make known the mystery of his Will to us, means in that Prayer of his, that as He and the Father are one, so we may be one also; to wit, by the *Unity* of the same Spirit.

John 1. 18.

John 17. 11.

*Mystical Unity*! O blessed Spirit! what reason have we to endeavour what we can, ever inviolably to keep that *Unity* of thine in the strictest bond of peace? that *Unity*, which the *Persons* of the glorious *Trinity*, in a coequality of honour and privilege, no one of the *Three* being before or after other, have alway constantly maintain'd? that *Unity*, by which Heaven and Earth, the upper and lower world, were design'd to be reconcil'd, and all things to be gathered together in one? that *Unity* lastly, by which the *Church militant* is not only kept and govern'd in it self, but is actually even here united to the *Church triumphant*? that, as we read in the verse following, there may be one body, as there's one Spirit, even as we are call'd in one hope of our calling.

2. 'Tis

2. 'Tis this *one Spirit* then, which by his vertue and energy animates and influences that *one body*, which holding Christ the Head, and growing up in him, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministred to all its parts, and according to exact proportion being compacted and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God, unto the edifying of it self in Love, Col. 2. 19. and this 4<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the *Ephesians*, the 10<sup>th</sup> verse.

Now as the *Body* is one, though it hath many members, and all the members of that one body, though they are many, yet make up but one body; as the *Apostle* argues 1 Cor. 12. 12. so the *Spirit* too, in all the diversities of his gifts, and differences of administrations, and several kinds of operations, is still but *one* and the self-same *spirit*, as he there at large discourses: and all that variety of dispensations tends constantly and regularly to *Unity*, as we have it here set down in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> verses; for the perfecting of the *Saints*, for the work of the *Ministry*, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come, in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

So then what the *Soul* is in the *natural Body*, a principle of life, which imparts heat and vigour, sense and motion, nourishment and growth, to all the parts of the body, as occasion requires, and applies it self with equal regards, and yet in different manners to the several members, according to their various offices, and places, and uses they have in the body: The same is the *Spirit* in the *mystical Body*, to infuse spiritual life and strength, to direct and assist, to guide and to govern all the members, according to the measure and capacity of each part.

And as the *Soul*, being *one* and the same in all its faculties and functions, orders and manages all to the good of the *body*; so do's the *Spirit* in his several ministrations, with an uniform multiformity, contrive and design all for the edifying of the body of Christ, for the building up of the *Church*.

- II. From this account, the *Apostle* hath elsewhere given us of the *Church*, by the instance and comparison of a *body*, the parts whereof are variously regulated and acted by the same *Spirit*; I say from this, we are easily taught to apprehend what this *Unity of the Spirit*, we are here oblig'd to keep, is, and wherein it doth consist; to wit, in *Church-fellowship*, whereby we (with the whole company of the truly faithful)

1 Cor. 12. 27. are made the *body of Christ*, and members in particular.

And this *Unity* is twofold.

1. Of the Members with the Head.
2. Of the Members one with another.

That *Unity of the Spirit*, by which the *Spirit* unites us to Christ the Head, is *Faith*; and so 'tis called in this very Chapter, the *Unity of the Faith*, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.

That *Unity*, whereby we are united among our selves through the same Spirit, is *Charity*.

Hereupon the *Apostle* sometimes branches the whole business of Religion into these two respects, *Faith* and *Love*; *Faith* in the Lord Jesus, and *Love* towards all the *Saints*; those who are of the Household of Faith.

Eph. 1. 15.  
Gal. 5. 10.

Thus



Thus as Philosophers in their *Unum, Verum, Bonum*, have made *Truth* and *Goodness* necessary attendants upon *Unity*; so is it here to be; the *Verity of Faith* and the *Benignity of Love*, to make up and to make out the *Unity of the Spirit*. These two will be the surest trials, whether we keep this *Unity of the Spirit*, and whether we keep up to it or no.

*Love* without *Faith* may produce an *Unity*, but not that of the *Spirit*; and on the other hand, *Faith* without *Charity*, if it may be suppos'd to be from the *Spirit*, is likely to have no great matter of *Unity* in it: So then, where there is no *Faith*, there's no Evidence of the *Spirit*; where there's no *Charity*, there's no hope of *Unity*. They must be both together to compleat the *Unity of the Spirit*.

I. First in relation to our Head, *Christ*; 'tis our *faith* must unite us to him, and that faith wrought in us by the Spirit of Christ. Gal. 5.22.

There is *one Lord*, one common Master and Saviour, to whose service we devote our selves; and *one faith* to be entertain'd and adhered to; and *one Baptism*, in which we make profession of that faith; as 'tis verse 5. So that this faith is not only *fides quâ credimus*, the *Grace of faith*, by which we are united to Christ, as the Head of the invisible Church; but *fides quâ credimus* too, the *Doctrine of Faith*, by which we relate to him also, as we are members of the visible Church, to which this *Unity* is required.

I shall not now dispute the possibility, whether a man may in great part leave the *Doctrine of faith*, and yet retain the *Grace of faith*, so as to live by it here, and be saved by it at last; much less shall I undertake to state, what points of that *Doctrine of Faith* may be relinquish'd, so as not to prejudice the *Grace of Faith*.

This is a thing of dangerous consequence, wherein nothing but an unavoidable, and such as may be a sinless ignorance can excuse a man. For he that knowingly and willingly leaves the *Doctrine of Faith* in any part of it, without doubt runs his soul upon a great hazard of having it cut off from the fellowship of Christ's body, the Church; since the *Truth of Faith* is to the keeping of this *Unity of the Spirit*.

And now let the Church of *Rome* please her self, as she will, in her pretended *Unity*, if she have not this *Verity* too to shew for her self. Indeed that *Unity*, they boast of, is but a pretence, whereas they have really more divisions in their Religion, then they charge ours with. For, as to some of our *Sects*, 'tis too too visible, by whom they are inspirited and whither they tend; and they do very uncharitably to impute the crafts of their own Men to the constitution of the Church of *England*, and to make the unhappiness of these loose times, which have given them this opportunity of designing against us, the Crime and fault of the *Protestant Religion*; a fault too, which themselves are more chargeable with.

For (not to mention their other differences about *Doctrine*) those different *Orders of Religion* amongst them are neither better nor worse, then so many *Sects* and several *Casts of Religion*; only they have that advantage in managing their divisions, which we have not, to pack up their *Fanaticks* into *Convents* and *Cloisters*, and so bring them under some kind of rule and government.

But had they that *Unity* they brag of, which they have not, *Unity* it self, unless there be *Verity* too, is no essential mark, no true note of the Church: since 'tis nothing but *Truth* can justify *Unity* it self; and

consent in error is as far from making a true *Church*, as a Conspiracy of Traytors, or a Combination of Highway-men is from being a lawful *Assembly*.

And with what face can they boast the *Unity of the Spirit* with the *Apostles* and primitive *Saints*, from whom they pretend their succession, when they have in so many weighty matters of *Faith* and high points of *Truth*, manifestly departed from them?

To keep up the *Unity of the Spirit* then, there must be the Unity of the same *Faith*.

And this as to the *Union* of the Members with their Head.

2. Again, as the Members stand related to one another, there must be the Communication of *Charity*, by which they are to be united among themselves. There must be *Goodness* as well as *Truth*.

The fruit of the Spirit, says the Apostle, is *Love, Joy, Peace, long-suffering, gentleness, Goodness, meekness*, Gal. 5. 22. Now where the fruit of the Spirit is not, it cannot well be that there the *Unity of the Spirit* should be; and here he tells us, in the verse foregoing the Text, that we must *with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*. It is in vain to endeavour to keep this *Unity* without those good qualities and charitable offices, whereby it may be secur'd and maintain'd.

Further from this *Communion* of the members with one another among themselves, there flows a double Result, both of them very requisite for keeping this *Unity of the Spirit*.

1. An inward *Sympathy of mind*, an intimate sense and fellow-feeling of one anothers griefs and joys, wants and supplies, distresses and succours, by charitable instincts, as we are *members* of the same body animated by the same Spirit. This is the second branch of the *Unity of Spirit*.

2. An outward *Symmetry of parts*, a fair comportment and *decorum* of shape and proportion, of order and decency, of posture and carriage to each other in God's worship and Church-ministrations, as we are *fellow-members* compacted and knit together by bands and ligaments; this the *bond of peace*.

And in both these respects all the *Members* seem to contribute to the safety and beauty of the whole, and to be mutually concern'd in the ease and welfare of their fellow-members; and this is, or ought to be, amongst all Christians, as Members of the same mystical body.

First, that in charity they *sympathize* one with another in all that befalls them, well or ill, in mutual congratulations and condolences.

1 Cor. 12. 26.

When one member suffers, the rest suffer with it, and upon all occasions express their affectionate resentments, and their readiness of serving to the good of the whole and of every part.

This is that the Apostle enjoins Rom. 12. 15. *to rejoyce with them that rejoyce, and to weep with them that weep*.

The *Nerves*, if touch'd with a sense of pain, even in the extrem and utmost parts of the body, speed notice of it presently through the whole body, and make a sudden report to the Brain, the seat and original of the senses; and 'tis the same Soul supplies every part with *animal spirits*.

The *Members* all in their several places and offices serve one another, & they

they do all naturally expect, and as kindly accept mutual assistances; nor do's any one say to the other, *I have no need of thee*; nor do they intrude upon one anothers provinces, but with great quietness discharge every one the duties of its proper station. 1 Cor. 12. 21.

O what a blessed *Unity of the Spirit* would it be, if *Christians* that profess one common faith, would be thus like-minded, and would commensurate their *Charity* to their *Faith*? if they would joy in their brethrens welldoing, as our Saviour tells us, the Saints and Angels in Heaven do, and lament their miscarriages; communicate to them in their wants, and be comforted in their comforts? if we would provoke one another unto good works, and do no ill to any one, though provoked. Luke 15. 7.  
Hebr. 10. 24.

These are the surest ligaments and ties of *Christian Society*, when the minds of professors are link'd together in love.

The very name of *Friendship*, though upon secular accounts, is a sacred thing; how much greater obligations doth *Religion* lay upon us, which is the highest friendship, as that which ties us together in God, making us fellow-citizens with the Saints, and partners in God's own household? Eph. 2. 19.

O how would that *City be the joy of the whole Earth*, if it were but compact together and at Unity with it self? and how pleasant a thing would it be to see Christian brethren live together in Unity? Psal. 43. 2.  
Psal. 122. 3.  
Psal. 133. 1.

But now this is our great misery and perverseness to boot, that a small difference in *Religion* opens a wide breach in *Charity*, and an inconsiderable disagreement of *opinion* procures an irreconcilable divorce of *affection*.

To that sad pass *Religion* is come, that whereas the main business and design of it is, to perswade *Unity* amongst men, and cannot it self otherwise well subsist, yet 'tis made generally the main occasion of quarrel, and become the greatest *boutefeu* and disturber of peace in the world. And there are not wanting those, who fancy that the *Unity of the Spirit* here prescrib'd cannot better be kept then by disuniting, *that is*, by uniting against the Church; and make that blessed *Spirit*, whose fruit is peace and gentleness, the Author and fomentor of discord and strife; as if the *fiery tongues*, he appear'd in, had been designed for Incendiaries; and the *Zeal*, signified by those sacred flames, could not be fairlier express'd, then in rash heats and foolish animosities; and the *rustling of the wind*, which fill'd the room where the Disciples were met, portended only continual storms and tempests to the Christian Church, and those to be bred within her own bowels. Acts 2. 2, 3.

But this is a Subject, not so fit perhaps for a publick declamation in the *Pulpit*, as for our private mourning in the *Closet*; that that, which our Lord and master made the cognizance and badge of discipleship, that we should *love one another*, is now so universally worn off and disown'd, that if *Charity* be the measure we must take of our *Religion*, it may well-near be a question, whether there be such a thing as Christianity left in the world. John 13. 35.

And surely, if *Charity* be so decay'd among Christians in the inward principle of it, it can be no wonder to see it so much lost in the outward circumstances and *decorum* of Religion, which is our *next* Consideration, and that which is mainly intended by the *bond of peace*.



III.

III. That the *Members* of this body keep a fair correspondence as to their outward appearance, that they be united in the decency of publick worship, and in the Order of Polity and Church-government.

This is exactly observ'd in the frame of the *body*, where all the parts, being compacted and fitly joyn'd together, bear a due proportion and *symmetry* to the whole, and to one another in particular.

Where there are fractions and divisions, ruptures and dislocations in the body, there may be wens and tumors, botches and stumous swellings, impostumes and gangrens; but, through the interception of those spirits, which should unite and maintain the parts, there can be no orderly and regular growth.

And thus 'tis in all *buildings*, where, if the parts hang loose from one another, the whole structure must of necessity be tottering and unsteady.

This is that the Apostle tells these *Ephesians* Chap. 2. vers. 20, 21. that they are *built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. In whom, says he, all the building fully fram'd together, groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord.* Intimating, there can be no true growth without this harmony and mutual coherence.

They must be *built together*; and that cannot well be, where they separate and stand off from Church-communion, and keep asunder.

Faction may *grow* indeed, by it self, in its separations; it may grow numerous and heady; but this is *not growing in the Lord.*

If there be a *Schism* and rent in the body, those parts which are cut off from its continuity and fellowship, must needs wither and languish, and in short time dwindle and fall to decay, by having the conveyances and passages of the spirits obstructed or intercepted, by which they were to be inviven'd and maintain'd.

'Tis the unity of worship and outward Ministrations that is this *bond of peace*, that which keeps the Church in peace, by tying and binding up the members of it together.

John 19. 23.

This is that *seamless* and uniform *coat* our Saviour wore; by which was signified the beauty and strength of Church-Ordinances and orderly Assemblies in regular and solemn devotions.

But now, *alas!* how have we in several parties (with the Souldiers) parted Christ's vesture, and cast lots upon his garments?

To return to the *Metaphor* of the Body: 'Tis the continuity of the Sinews and other vessels, which are disseminated throughout all the parts of the body, which by a communication of spirits preserves all the parts in life, and keeps the body it self in health and peace; when that's once stopt or checkt, when there's *solutio continui*, when the *bond of peace* is once broken, the parts at distance must inevitably for want of nutriment decay, and the body it self be in great disorder.

Cant. 6. 4

Further, the Church in the *Canticles* is compared to an *army with banners*, a society cast into regimental order, where every one keeps to his Company, and walks orderly, according to the rules of discipline, in rank and file. 'Tis the due observance of this Discipline that is to make her terrible: For an *Army*, though it make war upon the enemy, must be at peace within it self, by having the Souldiers in a punctual obedience to their Officers, and in a strict regard to the Rules and Methods of War, if it mean to prove victorious and successful.

And

And now, what hopes can we, *alas!* of the *Englist-Church* conceive of victory and good success, that we shall bear up against a common enemy, when we are thus divided among our selves? Since 'tis a sad truth, our Saviour has told us, that *a house divided against it self cannot stand*; Matth. 12. 25 so that had we no other enemies but our selves, we cannot promise our selves long thus to subsist.

May God of his mercy heal these our divisions, and tye us up once more in the *bond of peace*; for 'tis not the unity of *Doctrine* alone, (did we keep up to that) can keep up this Unity of Spirit in the bond of peace, without the unity of *Worship* too; since we find by experience, that those who have once divided from the Communion of the Church, (be it upon whatever pretence) seldom stop there, but to justify their separation, improve it, dividing further on still, and so run endless division, till they have burst all *bands* asunder, and cast the *cords* (or, as Plat. 2. some Interpreters render it, the *yoke*) of Government from them.

Now this *bond of peace*, wherein the *Unity of the Spirit* is to be kept, as was said, mainly respects the ordering of our publick Assemblies; and that in all religious exercises and duties, as in the reading and expounding of the Word, in the celebration of Holy Offices, and particularly in the Administration and use of the Sacraments, where the Spirit is in a more peculiar manner present and assistant. Here is indeed the *Unity of the Spirit*, the one Sacrament admitting us into Church-fellowship, and the other confirming us in it. So our *S. Paul*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. *For by one Spirit*, says he, *are we all baptized into one body, and are all made to drink into one Spirit*: And to these Sacraments his record, his testimony or evidence is more particularly applied and appropriated. 1 John 5. 8. *There are three that bear witness on earth, the Water in the one Sacrament, the Blood in the other, and the Spirit in both*; in like manner as *there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, Son, and Spirit*; to shew the effectual influences and applications of the same Spirit both above and below; that as those three witnesses in Heaven are *one*, that is, one in Essence, so these three on Earth agree in *one*, they are *ad unum*, one in consent, or *in unum*, one in purpose and design, to make us the members of the Church; *one*, as the Father and Son are *one* in the Unity of same Spirit.

IV. A word or two of our last head, that we may draw to a Conclusion; and that is partly the Arguments, *why* we should endeavour, and partly the Means *how* we may attain this *Unity of the Spirit*, and preserve it in the *bond of peace*.

And those we cannot find better then what *S. Paul* himself has set down, and we need seek no farther for them then the Context. The Arguments in the three Verses following the Text, and the means in the Verse foregoing.

1. The Arguments are taken from all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

1. From the Spirit, verse 4. that there's *one body*, the Church; and *one Spirit*, which is to animate that body; and *one hope of our calling*, that is, one and the same hope of glory to which we are called, and of which we are assur'd by the Spirit, as we are members of that body.

2. From the Son, verse 5. that there is *one Lord*, Christ, the Head of the Church; *one Faith*, to bring us to Christ; and *one Baptism* to admit us into the Church.

3. From

3. From the *Father*, verse 6. that there is *one God and Father of us all*, our *God* by title of Creation, and our *Father* by Adoption in Christ.

Now seeing then that every thing in our *Religion* is thus one, we stand oblig'd to endeavour the preservation of *Unity* among our selves; since by dividing our selves, we not only weaken our Christian interests, but indanger the forfeiture of those great advantages which Christ's Religion affords us.

II. Again, the *Means* and *Helps* of keeping up this Unity in the bond of peace, are *four*, as they are reckon'd up verse 2.

1. *Lowliness*; that we have a mean and humble opinion of our selves; *pride* being the great make-bate, and the very leaven of *Schism*.

2. *Meekness*; that we shew mild behaviour towards others, and even where there may be just occasion for *zeal*, yet express no *wrath*.

3. *Long-sufferance*; that, whereas a patient spirit is a peaceable spirit, we do not precipitate into passion or revenge, but bear with others infirmities and injuries too, and overcome their evil with our good.

Rom. 12. 21.

4. *Forbearance in love*; that we take not advantage of others ignorance or weakness, nor misconstrue things to the worst sense, but hope all things and believe all things of brethren to the best.

Rom. 12. 18.

And this if we could do, however difficult the thing it self may be, however unreasonable others may prove in standing out against *Unity* and *peace*; yet 'twill be charitable, it will be Christian-like for us, with all our skill and interest to *endeavour* it according to his Rule elsewhere, *if it be possible, as much as in us lies, to live peaceably withall men*; and God may in time give success to such our endeavours.

Would we, I say, *we* especially, who are *Subjects* (for these virtues here recommended, as they are very becoming to greatest Persons, so they are absolutely necessary to inferiors) would we deny our own peevish reasonings and froward passions; would we think well of others, which we cannot well do as long as we think too well of our selves, and meekly submit to our Governours in things not sinful, as God's Law no less than mans obliges us to do; would we possess our Souls in patience, and resolve rather to suffer any the greatest wrong, then to do the least; would we not judge the worst, and forbear one another in love, as charity obliges us; but in all indifferent matters make candid interpretations, this would be on all hands a suitable temper for reducing us to *Unity*, and a probable means of securing our *peace*.

I have done. Only let me beg your patience a little further, while I briefly apply.

I have before partly shewn, that those of *Rome* have not fairly kept up this *Unity of the Spirit*, with the truly ancient and Catholick Church; and by that means have fallen into those dangerous errors in Doctrine as well as practises in Worship, that we cannot without sin hold communion with them.

My business now is with all mildness to address a few words to our *dissenting Brethren* amongst our selves, who (break I will not say, but at least) slacken this *bond of peace*: for where people live in an open violation of Laws, it cannot properly be term'd a state of peace.

I know they will say, that they for their parts do keep this *Unity* by maintaining all Gospel truths; nay, and that as to Orthodoxy they are true Sons of the Church. If it be so, I wish they were such at all points,



points, and am sorry we should agree in *Doctrinals*, and not agree in *Circumstantials*.

Further, they will tell us, that they are men of *peaceable* minds, that wish well to the Government, and when time was, contributed much by their Prayers, and interests, and endeavours to its happy Restitution. It shall be none of my task to reflect upon persons or parties; I am willing to allow them all the merit they can reasonably lay claim to.

But let me ask them; why then, since we do profess the same truths of God, own one common *Saviour*, our Blessed Lord in his allsufficient merit and infinite satisfaction, and pretend to be guided by the same *Spirit*; since we are oblig'd in our obedience to the same *Government*, and live under the protection of the same *Laws*; why, I say, do they divide from us and withdraw from our Communion, to the indangering at least, if not the disturbance, of our *peace*?

To this they answer, that they leave us upon the same ground, as we our selves left the *Romish Church*.

But this, besides that 'tis a calumny; for she labours under those errors in *Doctrine*, and Superstitions in *Worship*, that we cannot without sin hold communion with her as I said: whereas our Church has, as to her *Doctrines*, laid them down in her *Articles* and *Homilies* past all exception; and as to the *Ceremonies* of her *Worship*, has in her *Preface to the Liturgy* given so prudent and just an account, that none can be offended, but those who will be pleas'd with nothing but what they do themselves: I say beside this, the case is no way the same betwixt them and the Church of *England*, as 'twas betwixt us and the Church of *Rome*.

For we only slung off an *unjust power*, (as it concern'd and became us to do) which they had usurped over us; but these desert a *Church* of which they are members, into which they were baptized, and were by their very birth engag'd in an obedience to her *Supream Moderator and Governour*; and for them to deny this *Supremacy*, is (I must tell them) neither better nor worse, then that which they would seem so utterly to detest, rank down right *Papery*.

So that there is a great deal of difference both in the *ground* and *manner* of our proceeding; since what *we* did was done by publick debate and authority in a just vindication of our own liberties; but what *they* do, is done upon their own heads, and I know not what private dissatisfactions in a seeming defiance of that obedience, which both naturally and religiously they owe to the *Laws* and *Constitutions* of their Country; these as long as they contain nothing in them that is forbidden by the word of God, binding the conscience of Subjects, according to that of *S. Paul, Rom. 13. 8.* that to just powers over us we must needs be subject, *not only for wrath, but for conscience sake.*

To bring the matter to a close point and a speedy issue, I do further demand of them in *one or two instances*, by which we may be able to judge of all the rest; namely, what they do think of the *Lord's Day*, and of the *English-Bible*?

Let me not be misunderstood, while I speak of things, which I hope we have all a great reverence for.

Their answer will be (no doubt) which is the hearty sense of every pious Christian amongst us, that they have a high esteem and veneration for them, inso much that if they were put to the sad choice, they would rather part with their lives, then quit them. I

I must again ask them; how they came into this opinion, upon what account they have entertain'd this esteem? Express command of *Scripture* there is none, either for the *one*, as we keep it, or for the *other* as we read it.

For as to the *Sabbath*, there's an express Command indeed for the *seaventh day* to be kept, but not so for the first; and supposing that the observation of the seaventh day from the Creation, being *Ceremonial* and peculiar to the *Jewish* people, the *morality* of that Precept lay in this, that *one day of seaven* should be kept for a *Sabbath*; yet why *this day* of the week should be made choice of, and set aside for that use, rather than any other, there's no *Moral* reason to be given; for if so, it would have been (as all things of that nature are) of a perpetual and universal obligation: and our Saviour, whose *Doctrine* was not defective in any thing necessary, would probably (had the case been such) have given some order about it himself, and not left it in a manner wholly, as he has done, to the judgment and determination of the Church.

1 Cor. 14.

Again for the *Bible*, as our people have it, allowing that by that place of the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, might be prov'd the necessity of having holy Scriptures translated into the *Vulgar* languages of all people where they come; yet why this *Translation*, rather than any other (as others there were, and many more might have been) should be commended to publick use? or why any one *verse* of the *Bible* is thus render'd, as it is, and not otherwise, was solely at the discretion of the Church, by whose order the *Translators* were employ'd, and their labours in the work accepted and approv'd of.

It remains then, that in these *two Instances* at least, which themselves own as the great Instruments of piety and advantages of Religion, they do (whether they will confess it or no) submit themselves wholly to the prudence and authority of the *Church*; for they have no other ground to stand upon.

Matt. 23. 24.

Now why they own her Authority in things of so great importance, and reject it in others of lesser alloy, we want their reason, as well as their humility; unless they have learnt to strain at Gnats and swallow Camels.

To make short, that I may shew how unreasonable, and of how ill example their non-compliance is; from hence I infer (which they can never deny) that upon the same account, and by the same arguments as *They*, I mean those, who first broke the pale, and led the way to other separations, threw off *Episcopacy* and *Liturgy*; upon the same account, and by the same arguments others of them disclaim *Ordination*, and to the unavoidable confusion of Families, as well as publick Societies, set up the *Congregational* way; upon the same account, and for the same reasons, others decry *Infant-Baptism*; upon the same account others *Judaize* in the day, as most of them do in the manner of the *Sabbath-rest*; lastly, upon the same account, those whom they reckon the worst of *Sects*, do not want something to plead for themselves unanswerably to them.

I say, by the same reason as they reject all other *Institutions* and *Usages* of the Church, they may also, if they please, cast off those too we instanc'd in, for which they have so high a veneration; seeing that the obligation, though it may be in a higher *degree* to some of these things, more than to others; yet 'tis in all of them of a like *nature*, and of the same *kind*, as being things mainly, if not meerly of *Ecclesiastical* Institution and practice.

After

After all, there are some of *Machiavil's* School, who will say, that *State-policy* may make good advantage of *Church-divisions*, and that the Magistrate may the better settle himself by ballancing parties.

I cannot tell what *policy* they mean; but to make divisions and factions the measure of Rule, *Divide & Impera*, is a *Maxim* rather proper for a cloven-footed *Usurpation*, then for a just *Monarchy*, whose rights are establish'd by Laws, and whose interests are certainly best preserv'd by the religious Union of its Subjects in God's publick worship.

But that's none of my business. 'Tis enough for us below, to beseech God of his mercy, that he will by his *Grace* infuse the best counsels into the hearts of Princes our Governours, and by his good *Providence* give them answerable success.

To end therefore as I begun; Let us in this solemn time of our Humiliation, after the Confession of our own sins, and the deprecation of those judgments due to us for them, according to *David's* example in his Penitential *Psalm 51*. (which he closes with a Prayer for *Church* and *State*, that God would be gracious unto *Sion*, and build up the walls of *Jerusalem*, let us) take the publick concerns into our devout consideration, bewail our National distractions, and beg of God to avert the fatal consequences of them, to heal our divisions, and repair our breaches.

Let us pray to him, that having put it into the heart of our Gracious Sovereign, by his Authority and his own Example, to endeavour the keeping this *Unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, he would grant him that honour in the success, that as one of his *Royal Progenitors* united the two *Families*, and his *Grandfather* of happy Memory united the two *Kingdoms*, so he may unite the minds of his dissenting *Subjects* in Truth and Peace.

May the publick Counsels effectually comply with the *Royal* sentiments; and may we in our several places assist them with our Prayers and pious endeavours, and may *Dissenters* themselves, laying aside all animosity or whatever sinister design, and consulting with that *Religion*, which is first *pure*, and then *peaceable*, with all *lowliness* and *meekness* (which are the best and truest characters of a *tender conscience*) yield a rational and conscientious obedience to those wholesome Rules of *decency* and *order*, wherein our *peace* is bound up; and all to the glory of the great God, whose Name and Worship is much disparag'd by our divisions, to the honour and security of the *Government*, and to the welfare of all us its *Subjects*, who want no advantage to make us the bravest and happiest people in the World, but this *Unity* and *Peace*, which the God of peace of his mercy grant unto us for his *Sons* sake, the *Prince of peace*, through his Blessed *Spirit*, whose fruit is *peace*. To whom, *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, three Persons and one God, be all Glory, Honour, and Praise, now and for ever. Amen.

James 3. 17.

11a. 9. 6.  
Gal. 5. 22.

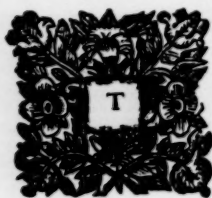


## Against Worldly Care.

A Sermon Preached at *Farnham Castle* before the  
Lord Bishop of *Winton*, Sept. 19. 1669. be-  
ing the XV. Sunday after Trinity.

S<sup>t</sup> Matth. VI. xxxiv.

*Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the  
morrow shall take thought for the things of it self;  
sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*



THESE words are part of the *Gospel* appointed by the Church for this days service, wherein this Exhortation, I have now read to you, of *taking no thought for the morrow*, is no less then thrice here inculcated in the 25, 31, and this 34<sup>th</sup> verses, and by strength of reason interr'd as a *Logical Conclusion* from several *Arguments*.

I know not, whether whole *Scripture* can afford us such another passage of so powerful and perswasive an address, either for the variety of *rational Deductions*, or the repeated inforcements of *Rhetorical expression*. And indeed the *Subject* requir'd it.

For our Saviour saw, that the *plebeus mundi*, the cares of this life were like to be the shrewdest chokes of his Doctrine, the greatest hinderances of a Christian course, and the main lets of a constant piety: the far greatest part of the World having all their time and thoughts taken up with the affairs of this life, *food and raiment*, and many times too things of less use and importance; and the Best of men being too too apt to be too much concern'd about things that perish, things that are in their nature and design utterly impertinent to their eternal End, which they should wholly and singly live for.

Wherefore Christ takes this pains here to work his hearers to an holy *indifference* in all worldly matters, to be thoughtless and secure, *what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, or what we shall put on*; not to trouble our selves or our thoughts about that which lies out of our way, and is properly none of our business; as if upon this lay the whole stress of Christianity.

We shall crave your patience to go over the whole Chain of this *Argumentation*, link by link, beginning at the further end, till we bring it down to our *Text*, wherein its fastned and nailed down, as it were, with a nail in a sure place.

1. First then, he fetches this *Conclusion* from the inconsistency of true piety with the cares of this life, or the pursuit of worldly interest together; thus, if we reduce the words into the method of the Schools, *verse 24.*

*He that is a servant of Mammon, can be no true servant of God:*

Now he that takes thoughts for his life and his body, that is, he that makes his carnal and worldly interest his design, and desires to live only to that purpose, *is a servant of Mammon.*

Therefore such a one can be no true servant of God, no right Disciple of Christ.

The first of these *Propositions* he proves from a generall received truth, which passed for a proverb, *ab Impossibili*, from the impossibility of serving two Masters.

God and Mammon, God and the World, God and self are two distinct Masters.

But no man can serve two Masters; Why? for where their service thwarts, as it will, he will be forc'd to shew respect and have dependence on the one, and to desert and slight the other.

Therefore no man can serve God and Mammon, and by consequence he that is a servant to the one, can be no servant of the others.

Wherefore if a man cannot possibly serve two Masters, but he must neglect one, whilst he attends the other; and if God and Mammon are such different Masters, that the principles and expectations of their service contradict one another, their *commands* and *rewards* are quite contrary, and altogether different and incompatible; and if to take thoughts for life and body be (as is imply'd) all one as to serve Mammon; the *Ergo* comes in very rationally, *ver. 25.* Therefore I say unto you, says Christ to those that meant to be his followers, *Take no thought for your life, what to eat or to drink; nor yet for the body, what to put on.* And this is the first Argument.

2. The second follows immediately. *Is not the life more then meat, and the body then raiment?* And this is a *Majori*.

He that has done that for you which is greater, will not grudge to do that which is less, will not be wanting to you in things of lesser moment.

Now God has given you life, which is more then meat, and a body, which is more then raiment.

Wherefore sure he will not deny you meat to maintain that life, nor raiment to preserve that body from the injury of weather and the shame of men.

Nay, he is obliged, as your faithful Creatour, to furnish you with all necessities and conveniences of life; to secure as well his own former kindnesses as your present welfare. 1 Pet. 4. 19.

Therefore do not by your distrustful cares for smaller things disoblige him, who has been your friend in far greater matters.

3. Thirdly, a *Minori*, *ver. 26.* Behold the fowls of the air: This for food. Then for Rayment, *ver. 28, 29, 30.* Consider the Lilies of the Field.

He that shews himself kind and bountiful to others of his creatures, that are far less considerable then Man is, and that have far less obligations upon their Maker's goodness, then man has, cannot possibly be

\* Q. 2

wanting

wanting to man in all things that are necessary and convenient for him.

Now God provides food for silly birds, which though they have no settled aboad, no barns to lay up stores in, no way of life to shift for themselves, no certain imployment, but singing the praises of their Maker; yet Providence so caters for them, that they are at all times cheerful and unconcern'd, though they know not aforehand where they shall make their next meal.

Again God puts on the Lilies and Tulips such gorgeous apparel for one days wearing, spun by Providence, such gay attire, as far surpasseth all the bravery of the most splendid Court, that Solomon himself with all his Magnificence and Wisdom to boot, could not match them.

And these are but inconsiderable creatures in comparison of men, and such as God has infinitely less obligations to take care of, and to do for, then he has for us, who are by adoption through his Son so nearly related to him, that he's our Heavenly Father.

Therefore, to be sure, he will not fail in looking after us, who are creatures of so much greater Excellence in our selves, and of so much nearer Relation to himself; insomuch that he, who distrusts God in these outward things, do's not only shew want of Faith, but of common sense too, by not depending upon God according to the dignity of his nature, as well as to the obligations of grace.

4. Fourthly; *ab Inutili*. This care is an idle useles thing, and comes in the end to no effect, *verse 27. Which of you by taking thought can add one Cubit to his stature?*

There's no wise man will lay out his time and his thoughts about a thing he cannot bring to pass; no one debates but of things possible and probable, which lye within the sphere of his own activity, and the verge of his own power to do and to compass.

But that our food and maintenance nourishes us, and augments and enlarges the proportion of every Limb, is not the product of our own care, but of God's blessing; who as he has determin'd the very stature and size of our bodies, so puts vertue and strength into that food we take in, to raise them to that growth, and preserve them in health.

Indeed our own care would sooner contract and shrink our stature, then enlarge it, or add Cubits to it.

And so is it in all our outward concerns; 'tis from the Divine benediction (which accompanies them) that they prove good and useful to us, and not from our own care, which is apt rather to marr then to improve the benefit and advantage of them.

*Psal. 127. 2.*

To instance; 'tis not rising early, and sitting up late, and eating the bread of carefulness; but 'tis Gods blessing which makes a man rich.

Therefore, if by taking thought we cannot raise our selves an inch higher, *if all our cares can add nothing to us; to what purpose is it for us to trouble our selves with needles thoughts?*

Upon all these Arguments the *Ergo* comes in again with very great reason, *verse 31. Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed?* Nor do's our Saviour leave off here, but pursues his argument with new mediums still;

5. Fifthly; *ab Inhoneſto*. These Heathen-cares and Atheistical distrusts are things highly misbecoming, things that Christians ought to



to be asham'd of. *For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.*

That which a *Heathen* and a *Worldling* makes his design of life, will in no wise become a *Christian* Professour.

But eating and drinking well, and wearing fine cloaths, and the cares and concerns of this present life, are the only things which *Heathens* mind and look after.

And therefore *Christians* ought not to make them the objects of their care.

6. Sixthly; *a Supervacaneo*. Before 'twas shew'd, our care could do us no good, could not avail us, and was therefore useles; but here let us suppose it might advantage us, yet there would be no need of it, no occasion for it neither; for your heavenly Father *knoweth that ye have need of all these things*. He knows it with a feeling affection: A Father need but know what his Child wants, and no body will make a question but out of a fatherly love he will help him to it.

Now who would not pity and laugh at the *folly* of any child, that should out of distrust of his fathers care, hoard up chack-stones and other play-things to make himself rich one day? Who would not be offended with that child's *wickedness*, who should reproach his Parents care with pilfering of victuals, and paltry propping for himself?

Yet so 'tis with most men, who look upon worldly things as their felicities, and use indirect courses to get them, and by a seeming distrust of God's providence, take ways openly to reproach it. Thus lies the argument.

*'Tis a needles thing for any one to be sollicitous for a business, which he is sure he has a potent and hearty friend, that is able and willing to look after it:*

*But God is such a powerful and cordial Friend, that can and will take care of us; there's an infinite wisdom, and goodness, and power, all ingag'd that we shall not want what is fit for us.*

*Therefore our taking thought will be a needles and indeed an unworthy thing.*

7. Seaventhly; *ab Absurdo*: thus,

*For a man to be wholly taken up about the accessories, and neglect the principal, to be imploy'd about trifles, and miscarry in the main chance, is a very absurd thing, and an unpardonable error in any reasonable creature:*

*But for a man to bend all his thoughts on earthly concerns, and lay out his endeavours in the pursuit of worldly advantages, so as not to mind at all the Kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, his spiritual and everlasting concerns, or at least to have but a perfunctory and superficial regard to those things, which are the most proper and adequate objects of humane desires and of a rational appetite, is to make the trifles and fooleries of our life, our main business and sole imployment, and in the mean while to take no thought of the service of God, and the salvation of our own Souls, which ought to be our great and main and principal design. In a word, it is to be serious in the greatest trifles, and to be triflers in things of most serious consequence.*

*Wherefore such taking of thought would be the fowlest absurdity any man, that has reason to see and forecast, can be guilty of.*

Our Saviour then puts these things into their right order, which most men of the World, by a wrong estimate, and a preposterous course of acting, jumble out of their due place, by making the first last, and the last first; I mean by preferring temporals to spirituals, *verse 33. Seek ye first,* says he, *the Kingdom of God*; and then, which will be no effect neither of our own care, but that result of Divine goodness and scriptural promise, the rest, *these other things will*, in a due subordination to those better things, *be added* and given in to us over and above.

Upon these grounds in the third place follows the same *Conclusion* in this 34<sup>th</sup> verse; *Take therefore no thought of to morrow*; and so we have brought the *Ergo* down to our Text. I call it the *same Conclusion*; for though the terms may seem to be alter'd, or something at least now to be added, which was not set down in the foregoing *Propositions*; there having been made no mention all along of *to morrow* till now; yet the whole *Context* shews it to bear the same meaning, and this restriction or limitation of time to belong to the rest as well as this; that our cares and thoughts may lawfully be busied about the present necessities of life, in a fair dependance upon God's good providence, and in a right subordination to his glory, and in the due use of lawful and warrantable means; yet so, as not to be extended to an anxious distrust of things future, or to be improv'd into a solicitous impertinent disquieting of our selves beforehand, for what may befall us hereafter.

Thus having examin'd the several links of this *Catena argumentorum*, this golden chain of holy argumentations, and treated particularly of all the silken threads which have twisted this *Conclusion* into so strong a cable-truth, that the cord cannot easily be broken; we are now come to the end of it, and that too fasten'd, as I said, and driven home with a *clavus trabalis*, a ship-nail of invincible necessity.

*Take therefore no thought for the morrow.* Why? *for the morrow will take thought for it self.* How so? *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.* Which in a short *Paraphrase* speaks thus:

Trouble not your selves about futurity, about what may happen in time to come; do not anticipate your cares, nor add impertinent vexations to your life, by forecasting and designing uncertainties, and vexing your selves at what you cannot foresee, nor help when it do's happen; but leave such things and events to God's infinite all-wise disposal, and minding your present duty, reserve all your strength about you, to bear you up against present difficulties and temptations. For the *morrow*, when it doth come, will be attended with care enough of its own, will have both its hands full. To morrow is a new day, and will bring a new duty and a fresh trouble along with it; and indeed such are the terms mankind in its own nature, as well as by Divine providence, is subject to; every day throughout the year in the whole course of your lives will have sufficient business for your employ, and trouble for your vexation.

These words drawn out at length do virtually contain in them two *Syllogisms*.

The *Proposition* to be prov'd is, that We are not to take thought of to morrow; and the *Medium* to prove it by is, the morrow's having care enough of its own. Thus then,

For

For a man to take care of a thing not yet in being, and he knows not whether it will be or no, and a thing too, that when it does come, will take care of it self, is to trouble himself, and make his life vexatious to no purpose.

But to morrow is such a thing, that is not yet in being, and no body can tell whether it will be, and that when it does come, will care for the things of it self.

Therefore to think of to morrow, is certainly to trouble himself about an uncertainty, and to draw upon himself impertinent vexations, and aggravate the misery of life by anticipation.

The Assumption is prov'd, which is, that To morrow, that is, all futurity, as 'tis uncertain, so brings certain care; in a general Maxim, by way of *Enthymeme*; thus:

Every day has its sufficient trouble and vexation belonging to it.

Therefore to morrow, when it comes, will have trouble enough, and care of its own to look after. Or to couch the reason yet closer:

To morrow will care for it self.

Therefore 'tis needles and foolish to take any thought for the morrow.

The Consequence is made good, in that every days trouble is sufficient for the day.

And this will take in the present time no less then the future, to day as well as to morrow; as if he had said, Let every day look to it self; what need you trouble your selves about the morrow? To day has enough to do of its own; and so will to morrow too.

But to leave the *Logick* of the Text, and the rational Connexion and Inference of the words, which is so admirable and unparallel'd, that I could not pass it by; we shall now bestow our ensuing discourse more practically, comprising all we have to speak of in three heads, all three of them deliver'd in proverbial forms of speech; which way of speaking is enough of it self to give weight and authority to any thing that is spoken.

I. Then here is a *χρηδα* or useful Lesson earnestly recommended, which tends to the quiet and felicity of man's life; *Take no thought for the morrow*; agreeable to that of the Poet, *Quid sit futurum cras fuge querere*, Trouble not your selves about to morrow.

II. A practical Reason of this Advice; *for the morrow will care for the things of it self*; that which is said of every man in the World, may as well be said of every day in any mans life; *Quisque suos patitur Ma-*nes, Every one has enough to do.

III. A Sentence or commonly received Maxim, upon which both that Lesson and this Reason of it are grounded; *sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*; or, as a learned Author tells us, that a Syriack Manuscript, intitled *Collectio gemmarum*, has worded it in that very Language which our Saviour used, *עָקָה רִיחָה כְּסֻעָה*, *Vexatio sufficit in hora sua*, Trouble is sufficient in its own hour.

And of these I shall speak with as much brevity and clearness as I may, yet in a retrograde order, beginning first with the Maxim, and from thence shewing the deduction of the Reason, and then concluding with the Conclusion it self, of *taking no thought for the morrow*; and we read them backward thus;

Sufficient



*Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof*; and by consequence this day has, and *the morrow* will have care enough of its own; and *therefore* do you mind your present business, and *take no thought for the morrow*.

I. First then of the Maxim; *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof*. The *evil* here is generally taken for *Malum pænæ*, the evil of punishment, all the afflictions and troubles, the incumbrances and turmoils of life. Every day throughout the year finds us enough to do, enough to suffer.

But I see no hurt, if we take in the *Malum culpæ* too, the evil of sin; temptations and lapses, and sometime great falls and miscarriages: what with the inticements of the *World*, which beleaguer us on every hand; what with the allurements of the *flesh*, which do so easily beset us; and what with the suggestions of the *Devil*, the prince of flies, which are continually swarming about us, and buzzing in our ears.

בעל ובוך  
Dominus muf-  
carum.

We walk in the midst of snares; every step we tread, we encounter fresh dangers; and every minute presents us with new matter for our spiritual conflict, inasmuch that the wise *Solomon* tells us, the righteous man, who has the greatest care of his goings, falls *seven times* a day, that is, a many times, *numerus certus pro incerto*; and accordingly his Father, holy *David*, had resolved *seven times a day* to call upon God; frequent assaults requiring our frequent retreats to God for grace and pardon.

Prov. 24. 16.

Pfal. 119. 164.

But the *other* is the more obvious sense; and here I have a large field of discourse in my view, should I undertake pathetically to set forth the *miseries* of human life, and in becoming language to bemoan the condition of this poor mortal God, *Man*, the Prince and Master-piece of the Creation, the Image of his Maker, and the Vice-roy of Heaven, *little lower then the Angels* in his primitive constitution, and yet through sin and want of understanding, become *like the beasts that perish*, and made the miserable object of his fellow-creatures wonder and pity, and the sport of a just and wise providence, (*Ita Deus nos pro pilis habet*,) like a Tennis-ball to be bandied and tost to and fro continually into a thousand hazards and misfortunes.

Pfal. 8. 5.

Pfal. 49. 12.

Ecc. 1. 14.

Every day opens a new *Scene* of *vanity* and *vexation*, into which two currents our whole life spreads and spends it self.

Rev. 2. 17.

Gen. 47. 9.

The superstition of distinguishing *days* into lucky and unlucky, is of older date then *Erra Pater*. An ancient *Greek* Poet has left us a peculiar Tract of this Subject, and Scripture it self often reproves the observing of times and seasons, which shews it has been of long standing in the world. But alas! all the days of man are *dies atri*, black and gloomy days. The *white Stone* which the *Romans* used to mark their lucky days with, *S. John* in the *Revelation* tells us, is a reward to be expected only after this life, by him that has held out to the end. Every one, even the most long-lived, may say as *Jacob* does, *My dayes have been few and evil*.

Job 5. 7.

*Hesiods* ἄλλοτε μητρὶν πάλαι ἡμέραν, ἄλλοτε μήτηρ, that one day of the month is a Mother, another a Step-mother, some days are kinder then others, others more severe, is but a vanity. Every day has its portion of care and trouble assigned it: Nor can any man's *Horoscope* secure him from the disasters of humane *nature* or common *fortune*; since all mankind, as if they had been all *Quartâ lunâ nati*; (which was *Hercules* his Nativity) are born to labour by natural instincts, as the sparks flie up-ward;

So *Job* tells us, one of no mean skill in *Astrology*, as we may perceive by his mentioning *Orion*, and the *Pleiades*, and *Arturus*.

*Job* 9. 9.

Should I speak of the various and troublesome *appearances* of nature, of the *infirmities* of humane constitutions, of *diseases* and common *accidents*, of *casualties* and *mischances*, that we are every moment of our life liable to; of all the *perils* and *inconveniences* which attend us from our infancy to our riper years; of the *Elements* and all the *creatures*, that, since our revolt from God, have entred into a confederacy against us, and lie at catch every where to mischief us; and above all, of strange and secret over-ruling *providences*, which sometimes seize single Persons, and otherwhiles surprise whole Nations, and overthrow whole Societies of men; I shou'd be injurious to my time and your patience.

But what need I draw up a *Catalogue* of evils from *without*, when man himself will not let himself be at quiet, but is the greatest contriver of his own unhappiness? When the Little world *within* is as full of trouble as the greater one without?

See how the life of man is dasht with the fume, and tost with the billows of unruly *lusts* and disorderly *passions*? how he swags and bulges on one side and t'other, that he can never stand still, restless betwixt foolish *hopes* and unreasonable *fears*? And yet God and Nature design'd *Hope* and *Fear* for the great Instruments of felicity and Helps of life in all conditions; that the One might buoy us up in adversity, the Other pois us in a prosperous estate: and certainly these two (if held by a steady hand) and kept in a due *equilibrium*) would prove the just Ballance of our mortality.

Not to mention the very trouble of eating and drinking and serving nature, which though sensual persons look upon as *recreation*, yet some Philosophers, students of Nature, have been so ingenuous, as to confess a meer *drudgery*,

Add to this the tedious returns of the same *occurrences* over and over, that a *Historian* of our own tells us an old Country-man, that pretended to higher reason (it seems) than his Neighbours, went out of the World in a discontent upon this very account, leaving it in writing, That he had no trouble upon his mind, which made him make away with himself, but only that he was weary of seeing the Sun so many years together rise and set.

Then do but consider, how we spend our lives in vanity, as a tale that is told, as the *Psalmist* expresses it; which, after it has been once told, yields no great pleasure in the telling again and again, day after day; thus even the Comforts of our life are but *Crambe*, nauseous repetitions of the same thing; how the most, and perhaps the best of our hours are taken up with *impertinence*, a thing which goes to the heart, and must needs be a thorough vexation to all ingenuous spirits.

And would not all this put together, make any man almost a weary, and with the Poet, after a great Treat, stretch himself and cry, *Obe jam satis est*, Obe! Enough, I have e'en lived long enough; no more, I beseech thee, good God; and be so far from taking thought for the morrow, that he would rather wish (if it were in his choice) to make an end to day?

But such is the condition of our mortality, that we must jog onward on our way, and every morning take up the pack again of our daily trouble.

And, which is worse than all this, as if the load of cares, each day lays upon our shoulders, were not heavy enough, we our selves do *proprio jumento malum accersere*, fetch in more gritt, and heap more bags still upon our selves, by bringing future cares upon us, and by tormenting our selves before the time.

And yet this, as it adds to our present disquiet, so gives us no ease for the morrow; for *the morrow*, when it comes, will find those cares and vexations, which belong to it; for *the morrow* must and will take thought for the things of it self.

II. And this is the *second* part, the *Deduction* from that general saying; that, as every day has enough to do of its own, so *the morrow*, (think what you will, take thought as you please aforehand,) will bring its business and trouble along with it.

It is a sorry way of losing present opportunity by putting off, what should be done to day, till to morrow; and this is properly *Procrastination*: and 'tis no less irrational and more cumbersome to undertake this day the work of the morrow. It is indeed *τὸν ἀδυνάτων*, one of the impossible things, and that's the worst work we can set our selves about; it being alike out of our power to fetch to *morrow* hither, as to recall *yesterday*.

They do best sure, who, according to God's own example in his *Hexameron*, his six days-work, are neither *backward* to loose time, nor *forward* to gain trouble; but fairly perform *opus diei in die suo*, the work of the day in its day.

And such may assure themselves of their daily allowance, in the constant attendance of Divine providence upon their well ordered cares and labours; that they shall have their *pensum diurnum*; the bread of the day for the duty of the day.

And thus we pray, *Give us this day our daily bread*; we must earn it this day, and God will give it us this day. *Christ* has not taught us to pray for the bread of to *morrow*, and here he bids us not think of to *morrow*.

Exod. 16. 34.

And herein the *Papists* fancy a strange happiness, that they can earn for to day and to morrow too, and can lay up a treasure of *merits* for posterity; and the *Pope's* Indulgences will give you so many thousand good *tomorrows*, by pardons for millions of years. But *alas!* he that trusts to such provisions as these, will find, when the morrow comes, that if he doth not work he must fast, and that the *Saints* forecast, without his own care, will stand him in no stead; and we know, that the *Manna* which was preserv'd in *Aaron's* Urn, was not for the *tomorrows* eating; 'twas only kept for *Memorial* and shew, and for no other use; and so the works of the *Saints* may be commemorated, but must not be trusted to.

To *morrow* then, as 'tis fit it should, must look to it self, and so 'twill; and it was the goodness of Providence, let men complain as they will, has so ordered it, that our daily necessities should extimulate our daily industry; and this brings down a daily blessing.



'Tis one of *Abi Ali* the Emperours Proverbs, and is now grown common among the very rabble of the *Turks*, رَوَاكَ يَطْلُبُكَ Thy allowance will find thee out, take thou no care, think not of to morrow; Providence will look after thee, and help thee to thy portion, to what is thy due.

I cannot approve the *Turkish* opinion of *Fate*; but this saying being accommodated to *providence*, if our own due care be not wanting, speaks Christian like.

So then if we can be but contented to day, we may be secure of to morrow; for the morrow will take care of it self; and if so, what need have we to take any thought for the morrow? which is the *Exhortation* it self, with which we shall make an end: Take no thought for the morrow.

III. How? take no care for to morrow? not provide and be aforehand in the World? However this may be good Divinity, it looks like no good husbandry. Did not *Joseph* provide against the seven years famine, and the Apostles the like? Nay, our very Saviour in his small Company was not without one to carry the Bag.

Gen. 41. 43.  
Acts 11. 29.  
John 12. 6.

I see we are to distinguish: 'Tis right; all care is not forbidden. The Apostle says, He that provides not for his Family is worse then an Infidel. We must know then, there's difference betwixt thinking and taking thought; the Original will shew it better, 'tis *μεριμνᾷν* says S. Matthew, which the English render, as well it seems as they could, to take thought, to distract ones mind with anxious cares and distrusts; *μεριμνᾷν* says S. Luke, to hang in suspense, and puzzle himself so with unnecessary doubts, that his care for the future indisposes him for his present duty.

1 Tim. 5. 8.

Luke 12. 22.

The taking no thought for the morrow then is to sit down contented with ones present condition, *στέγειν τὰ παρόντα*, to serve God cheerfully, however the world goes, and to do my duty whatever comes on't, and never trouble my self with what is not in my power; to mind the business of the day, and to leave the disposal of to morrow to God.

A man of such a temper and resolution as this, how quiet is he amidst publick turmoils? how unconcern'd in the event of things? how much at ease, when all the rest of the World are in trouble and disorder?

He readily complies with God, as his Sovereign, in all his dispensations, surrenders all up to his good pleasure, and not out of constraint, (as very worldlings must do) but out of conscience, and prudence, and friendship, submits himself and all his concerns to God's powerful, and wise, and gracious managery.

He spends every day as it were to be his last, nor has he any expectations of the morrow; and when after his nights repose he finds himself again restor'd to the business of the World, he wakes in the likeness of God, and acts over the morrow, as his resurrection-day.

Indeed his thoughts are so fixt to his present business, that they never ramble so far as to the morrow; or rather in the wide prospect of eternity (which is his every days contemplation) there's no such thing as a morrow; but all past, present, and future time is compris'd in one intire day, in the *τὸ νῦν*, in one standing moment.

He thinks *meat*, and *drink*, and *cloaths* are things below a wise man's notice, and that there is nothing but *Heaven* is truly worth the seeking; hither his generous designs and passionate cares are all directed.

As to the concerns of *this life*, he's very indifferent; he's sure God will deal by him as a Father by his child; that he will not let him want things necessary, or be in such a tattered condition, as may reflect upon the reputation of his Heavenly Father's goodness: Nay, that he will provide for him such things as are fittest and best for him; and with those things, be they what they will, if it so please God, he's very well pleas'd.

Psal. 4.7.

Let others have *Corn*, and *Wine*, and *Oyl*, so he have but the light of God's countenance, he takes himself to be the happiest man.

He lives above the region of *Hope* and *Fear*; nor is confident of any thing but God's favour, nor distrustful of ought but his own heart.

For *outward things*, when he has them, he makes them the Instruments of his *charity* and other virtues; when he has them not, that very want is improv'd into an exercise of his *humility*, *patience*, and other graces.

His whole design is taken up in bettering of himself and his *spiritual* estate; and yet as to his *worldly* fortunes too, he minds them so far, that his *prudence* is not wanting in the fair use of those means God's *providence* affords him.

The greatest advantage though shall not tempt him out of the road of honesty; for with him a *drachm* of Conscience out-weighs a *talent* of Interest.

His *industry* is likely accompanied with a blessing; but whatever the *success* be, so he have done his *duty*, he's well assur'd there can be no miscarriage.

His earthly *cares* are all subordinate to glorious *ends*; and that *futurity* which he mainly labours for, is that of the *next life*.

2 Cor. 8. 21.

Yet he neglects not decent provisions for *this life* too, but so that his cares may be rather the innocent diversifements, then hinderances of his *devotion*; and though he resolves to live to day, and adjourns the morrow's cares to the morrow, yet he doth not live *extempore*, from hand to mouth, as we say, but according to the *Apostles* Instructions *provides things honest*, I, and things honourable too, so the *Greek* word signifies, *in the sight of all men*: as knowing that *Hospitality* and *Charity* it self cannot be well exercis'd without some forecast.

He knows he is oblig'd by all Laws to provide for his *Family* and dependences; and he do's it so, that in the first place he endeavours to entail God's blessing upon his posterity, & then he's sure whatever he leaves behind him for them, be it more or less, it will be, if they have *grace*, and can be contented, a fair, and a plentiful, and a flourishing *estate*.

Above all, he is concern'd in the *Publick*, and for the good of *Church* and *State* his affections are zealously engaged.

Upon a foresight of *Judgment*, he sets himself in the gap, and will not let God alone till he have with his Prayers and importunate Requests disarm'd him.

Psal. 122. 6.

He thinks it not enough to *pray for the peace of Jerusalem*, but he *pleads* for't, and *pays* for't, and *fights* for't, and is willing to *dye* for't.

Yet his *zeal* shall not make him step beyond the bounds of his calling, nor will he with *Uzza*, when the *Ark* is in danger, provoke God with his indiscretion; but leaves things above him to God and to his Superiours, and let them govern the World.

If

It he be in publick place, to serve *Religion*, or his *Countrey*, or his *Friend*, he cares not what hazard he runs, what disgrace or other inconvenience befall him, and doth his duty, and performs his Conscience to *day*, whatever becomes of him *to morrow*.

In the upshot of all; though he be heartily concern'd in present affairs, and contribute all his Counsels and Interests for a happy settlement of things; yet he's never troubled about the *event*, but leaves that wholly in God's hand; as knowing that if his Honest purposes and Loyal endeavours miscarry, God has many more ways, which he knows not of, to provide for his own glory.

And if at last the sins of the times, and the madness of the people do pull things to pieces, and set the Commonwealth afloat, likely God's special *providence* doth help such good men as this to a plank to swim to shore on, and secures and maintains them in the midst of publick ruins. Thus, though he never took any thought of the *morrow* for himself; yet he is not to seek when the morrow comes, but has God's good providence attending on him *to day and to morrow*, and the next day, *and for ever*, to keep him and to preserve him, and to direct him by *Grace* here, to *Glory* hereafter.

*To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one Immortal, Infinite, Almighty, and Ever-Blessed God, be all Praise, Honour, and Glory, Now and for Evermore. Amen.*

*Of*



## Of false Pretences to Godliness.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* in *July*  
1675.

The *XV. Psalm*, the last Verse, the last words of  
the Verse.

—*He that doth these things, shall never be moved.*

Rom. 8. 22.



*REST* and settlement is that which the whole Creation groans after. All the motions and operations of the several Creatures do naturally tend to *rest* and *quiet*; and all the actions and agitations of mankind, and the tumblings and tossings of this life are rationally design'd for it; *to wit*, to improve us into such a condition, wherein we may be secur'd from further disturbance, and may *never be moved*.

But *alas*! this *rest* is hardly to be met with in this troublesome World.

The *Heavens*, after so many hundred years continual revolutions, are still whirl'd about, and walk the same rounds as from the beginning; nor doth the *Earth* it self, if we may believe latter Philosophers, ever stand still. Night succeeds day, and day night, and there's a perpetual vicissitude of times and seasons.

Even those things, which are allow'd the privilege of dying, when they make their *Exit* off this busie Scene of the World, are not yet exempted from this restless condition, but are still, after their dissolution, forced to undergo an infinite variety of changes.

Of all things in the World there's nothing so far from this *rest* and unmoveableness, as the *soul* or *mind* of Man is.

The greater acquits of *learning* any man has made, the more he is dissatisfied with his own ignorance; while new words of knowledges discover themselves, to invite at once and discourage his unwearied curiosity.

The *ambitious* man, the higher he climbs, his Desires still march equal paces along with his Condition; nor can he arrive at that grandeur of mortal felicity, but still he sees he may grow greater; and that very thought disquiets him.

The *covetous* man, the more he gets together of this worlds goods, the more he finds reason to apprehend the possibility of want; and that distrust lasts as long as he lives, and puts him always upon proggings.

Meats and drinks and other delights, wherein the *voluptuous* person places his felicity, perish in the using; nor do's yesterdays excess leave any remembrance behind it, but the distemper, and sets the man upon new inventions to carefs his dull, yet insatiate appetite. Col. 2. 22.

Thus men of this *World*, the further they advance towards their end, the further they are still off from it, and can never be at *rest*, till death at last steal upon them, like sleep upon froward or playesome children; and then, (like those children that let fall their play things) those things, which all our life time were the exercises of our pastime or quarrel, of themselves drop out of our hands.

And yet sure *God*, who made nothing in vain, did not create Man purposely to weary himself in seeking to satisfy a restless appetite, and to wear out his life in continued Scenes of vanity and vexation.

No; there is something sure, if we could be so *happy*, or would be so *wise*, as to pitch upon it, would give us *rest*, and bring us to an unmoveable state of settlement.

If we will but go along in that track, which the *Royal Prophet* has in this *Psalms* chalkt out for us, we shall be able at last, nay even in this life, to sing a *Requiem* to our souls, and may say in a better sense, then the Rich fool in the Gospel did, *Soul take thy ease, for thou hast goods laid up for many years*; nay, for a whole eternity. Luke 12. 19.

For if we do *these things*, if we follow this course here prescrib'd, we shall never be moved. *He that does these things shall never be moved.*

In which words we have *two* things considerable, a Promise, *never to be moved*; and a Condition, *to do these things*.

A blessed *Expectation* of an unmoveable Settlement, of an unchangeable State; and a necessary *Qualification*, to fit us for that estate, that we *do these things*.

A glorious *End*, being the utmost felicity of Man, to which all his Thoughts, Designs, and Indeavours do constantly tend, to be at *Rest* in full satisfaction, and in a perpetual free undisturb'd injoyment of his chiefest Good; and the readiest and surest *Means* of attaining that End, *the doing of these things*.

Now that we may understand what *These Things* are which we must do, and what is meant more particularly by this *unmoveable State*; we must cast an eye back upon the foregoing *Verses*.

I may call this Psalm *David's Catechism*, wherein he does, as it were upon design, remove those *false Confidences*, wherewith most people delude themselves, as we shall shew anon; and set the *Interest* of mankind upon a right Bottom, by stating and giving a true Account of *Human felicity* and the whole *duty of Man*.

It consists (as a *Catechism* should) of *two* parts; a *Question* and an *Answer*.

The *Question* in the first verse, *Lord, who shall sojourn in thy Tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy Hill?*

The rest of the Psalm is the *Answer* to this *Question*, wherein the Person is describ'd, and a full Character given of him in *eleven Notes*.

Time will not give leave nicely to distinguish them: Let it suffice, that I run them over with a short *Paraphrase*.

*Verse*

*Verse 2.* He that in his general Conversation walketh uprightly, in the sincerity of his intentions, and in his Actions worketh Righteousness, do's what God's Law and Mans require at his hands; and in his Words and discourses speaketh the truth in his heart; that is, the Plain, Honest, Fair-dealing man, whose Designs are just and right, whose Thoughts, Words, and Actions are all of a peice, who Speaks as he Thinks, and Does as he Says; is Upright in his Intentions, and Downright in his Discourses, and Punctual in his Performances.

*Verse 3.* He that's Quiet, and Peaceable, and Well-condition'd, and a Blessing to all about him; for he Wrongs no body, neither by word, he backbiteth not with his tongue, nor by Deed, nor do's evil to his Neighbour; no, nor in Thought neither, or the least Surmise, for he will not take up a reproach against his Neighbour, though he have it from others; nay more, he will not receive it, he will not give it the hearing; no, nor endure it, (for these three words our English Translation gives for one Hebrew) but will rather check then countenance the Tale-bearer.

*Verse 4.* Who in his Friendship and Carriage towards men, shuns the Acquaintance, and flies the Company of the Vile; those that are scandalously, notoriously, and desperately Bad; but has a respect and kindness for the Good, he honoureth and maketh much of them that fear the Lord.

But indeed, in the former part of the Verse, the Hebrew propriety inclines me rather to the Reading Psalms, he that setteth not by himself, but is lowly in his own eyes; the Humble Modest man.

Ecc. 8.2.

To go on. Who in his Contracts and Bargains, especially in his ingagement to the Magistrate, (which is peculiarly called the Oath of God) though he swear to his own hurt and hindrance, changeth not, but will, maugre all ill fortunes, to the hazard of Life and Estate, preserve his Loyalty and his Conscience, and maintain the honour of his word.

*Verse 5:* He who, in the disposal and manage of his Estate, puts not out his money to Usury; that is, do's not contrive unlawful gains, but rather (as the contrary virtue is implied) lays it out in acts of Charity, and for publick Benefit.

Lastly; who, if he be in office, or in any place of Trust, will not be corrupted to take a reward against the innocent; but will freely and indifferently, without partiality or respect of persons, administer Justice.

You see then, that this Psalm is in a manner a Summary of the second Table-Precepts, containing most of those Duties which we owe to our Neighbour, the Observance whereof is call'd Righteousness; so that the particulars of this Account in the whole amount to this; An Honest, Righteous, Charitable, Obliging, Humble, Peaceable, Well-minded man.

Now follows in the words of the Text, the Epiphonema, or Burden and Recapitulation of the whole Psalm: He that does these things, shall never be moved.

He that does these things then, is the Person thus and thus qualified; he that acts Justly with all men, and deals Charitably, as others occasion requires, and his own condition permits; and Never to be moved, is first to sojourn in the Tabernacle, that is, to be a true member of the Church Militant, and no Hypocrite; and secondly, to dwell upon the Holy hill, that



that is, to be a Candidate for the Church-Triumphant, and no *Reprobate*. In a word, to be a settled fixt man in his *Principles* and in his *Assurances*, both in his *Spiritual* and his *Eternal* State. Nay, further also, *not to be mov'd* signifies sometimes worldly Prosperity and the Settlement of our *Temporal* estates. So *David* somewhere of himself, *I said*, Psal. 30. 6, 7. that is, I thought, *thou hadst made my Hill so strong, that it should never be moved*; that is, that God had so confirm'd him in his Kingdom, and so secur'd his secular Interest, that he should never have found a change; and of the Godly man elsewhere, that he should be *like mount Zion, which can never be moved*; Psal. 125. 1. and thus even in this sense too, we may take in the *Holy hill*.

Having thus explain'd the Words, let us now draw forth somewhat for our *Observation*, and I shall comprise it in these *three* practical Heads.

1. That *Religion consists in Action*; or that the Truth and Power of piety lies in practise; *He that DOTH these things*.
2. That *Acts of Justice and Charity are the fairest Evidences of Grace in a Christian, and his best Assurances for Glory*; or that the Righteous and Charitable Christian is the truly Godly man; or, if you will have it by contrary, that Unrighteousness and want of Charity are certain signs of Hypocrisy and Insincerity: *He that doth THESE THINGS*.
3. That *Honesty is the best Policy*; or that a man's just dealing is his best Security, even for his Temporal Concerns. *He that doth these things, SHALL NEVER BE MOV'D*; no, not in his worldly enjoyments.

First for the first Position, (which will take up our present time,) that *Religion consists in Action*. I might prove it by several *Arguments*; as

1. *First*; From the *Subject* of Religion, the Mind, or Heart, or Soul of man: That *Actions are the best expressers of the Mind*, and the discoverers of the Heart. Now the *Heart* in matters of Religion is All in All; so that our piety if it be not Practical, it may be suspected, 'tis not hearty, 'tis not Real.
2. *Next*; From the nature of the *Covenant* betwixt God and us; That *Action is the Condition on our part*: we are not to stand still, and let God alone to do all upon us and for us, but to *work out our own salvation*; and indeed to this very end *Christ* died, as to seal the *Covenant* with his blood, so to Purchase to himself a *peculiar People, zealous of good works*. Phil. 2. 12. Tit. 2. 14.
3. *Again*; From the manner of *procedure* at the great day of Accounts, when the eternal Retributions shall be adjusted to men *according to their works*; and *David* speaks it as a remark of Divine Mercy, as well as Justice, that he shall judge every man so. Psal. 62. 12.

And this I confess would be the most Rational way of *Probation*; but I shall rather make choice of a more popular Method, and perhaps no less satisfactory, by way of *Negation*; shewing, that All things else, what e're they may be, which people fondly rest upon, are without a good Life insufficient and fallacious grounds of Confidence, and cannot make out a man to be truly *Religious* or Godly: *He that doth these things, &c.*

'Tis not said, he that *Professes* this or that, or he that *Believes* thus and thus, or he that is of such or such an *Opinion* or *Way of worship*, or he that sets up *new Lights*, and pretends the *Spirit* for his immediate Guide: 'Tis not he that *Hears* much, or *Talks* much of Religion; no, nor he that *Preaches* and *Prays* much; nor he that *Thinks* much of these things, and *means well*, but 'tis he that *doth these things*, that is actually imploy'd about them, that is the *Religious* and truly *Godly* man.

'Tis not, I say, a formal *Professour*, a confident *Solifidian*, a wild *Opinionist*, a high-flown *Perfectist*; it is not a constant *Hearer*, or a mighty *Talker*, or a laborious *Teacher*, or a gifted *Brother*, or a simple *Well-willer* must pass; but 'tis the *Honest and Sincere Doer* of these Things, that will abide the Test and stand the Tryal; when all other flashy Pretences shall, in those searching flames, be burnt and consumed like *hay and stubble*, as the *Apostle* expresses it.

1 Cor. 3. 12.

Let us more fully and particularly go over these popular *Mistakes* and *vulgar Errours* in Religion; since 'tis to be fear'd, that the generality of People, resting themselves upon these false Bottoms, fall short of true Grace here, and *Glory* hereafter, and miscarry both in their *Performances* and *Expectations*; the ground of their *Duties* and *Hopes* too being ill-laid, and built upon the sand.

And I must grave your patience, if I insist the longer upon them, as being partly grown so common and *Epidemical*, partly of so very ill consequence, not only to the *spiritual* welfare of those persons that are given these ways; (these being the most dangerous flats and shelves, upon which souls miscarry in their voyage heaven-ward:) but also to the *temporal* peace and prosperity, some of them, of the whole Nation and Kingdom where they get footing once and obtain credit.

I. First then, 'tis not a bare *External Profession*, which many poor ignorant souls content themselves with, that will serve the turn.

This indeed is the Cognizance and Badge of *Christianity*, and may distinguish a man from a *Jew*, a *Turk*, and an *Infidel*; but as it Distinguishes a man, so it Obliges him too; and if it be not made good by a suitable Practice, renders his condition far worse then theirs, who are utter Strangers or direct Enemies to *Christ*.

Matth. 26. 49.

Mat. 27. 29, 30.

John 19. 5, 19.

To wear *Christ's Livery*, and to do him no service, is but to mock a gracious Master; to own him in our *Profession*, and deny him in our *Practice*, is with *Judas* to betray him with a Kiss of *Homage*; with the rude Souldiers to bow the knee before him, and in the mean time to beat his Sacred head with his reeden Scepter; and with *Pilate* to Crown him with *Thorns*, to crucifie the Lord, and write over his head, *King of the Jews*; in a word, to grieve him with our Honours, and wound him with our Acknowledgments.

A *Christian profession*, without a life answerable, will be so far from saving any one, that 'twill highly aggravate his *Condemnation*; when a dissembled Friendship at the great day of Discoveries shall be look'd upon as the worst of *Enmities*.

A meer outside Formality of Worship is at best but *Prometheus* his Sacrifice, a *Skeleton* of bones, and a Religious cheat.

Rom. 1. 22.

What the *Apostle* says of Philosophers, that *professing themselves wise, they became stark fools*, by not applying their knowledge to right purposes, may be as well said of such Professours, that professing themselves *Christians*, they become errant *Jews*, *Turks*, or *Heathens*, by not living according to the Rules of Christian doctrine.

For

For what will be thought of us? what can we think of our selves? when some of them shall be found to have exceeded most of us in Righteousness? and what can a *Christian* expect at God's hands, when he comes short, not only of *Pharisees* and *Sadduces* in the *Jewish* Church; of *Phocion* and *Aristides*, of the *Cato's* and *Scipio's* of *Heathen*-times, but even of many of the worst sort of *Catives* and *Miscreants*, the very rabble of *Mahumetans* and *Pagog-worshippers*?

'Tis a sad Consideration, and a thing that reflects much upon the Honour of *Christ* and his *Religion*, that several *Musulmen*, as they call themselves, may upon a more rational Account, in respect of their better order'd lives, demand of *Christ*, according to his own laws, the rewards of Bliss, then many of his own followers can. And it must amaze us with horror, to hear it out of our Saviour's own mouth, that if these have not a Place appointed them in Heaven, they shall yet have a more easie Apartment, a more tolerable Condition assign'd them in Hell, then such Professours. Mat. 11. 22, 24.

Thus the *Covenant of grace* we enter into, will, if we take not care to perform the condition, stand us in no other stead, but to bind us fast over to eternal Punishments.

We count him no honest man, that sets his *band* and *seal* to a *Bond*, and never minds paying the *Debt*; nor will such a neglected Engagement keep him out of Prison, but most certainly help him in, and keep him there; and thus will it be with a world of *Professours*, who, notwithstanding their *Baptismal* obligations, live loosely; to whom the abused privileges of Christianity will in no wise serve for *protection*, but be produced as the main *evidences* against them, be look'd on as their most heinous crimes, and consequently inflame their reckonings.

But alas! what do I talk of *Profession*, which in this Age of ours begins to be laid aside too as well as Practice? as when the Body and Substance of the *Tree* is gone and perished, the Bark it self straight withers and dies, and stands only for the Monument and winding sheet of the Body that once bore it.

We may say of *Protestant Religion* in *England* now, what the Poet said of *Pompey* the Great, after he had outliv'd his overgrown Power and superannuated Glories; *Stat magni nominis umbra*. It looks like the Remains of some old sacred Oak, or the Ruins of some ancient reverend Monastery. Lucan.

*Christianity* is so dwindled and lost a thing now adays, that there's scarce the *Profession* of it left; when several set up for themselves in *new ways* or in *no ways*, agreeing in this, that they forsake the *Assemblies*, slight the *Ordinances*, and disavow the *Government* of the *Church*; and of very many it may be fear'd, they have nothing to prove their being *Christians*, but the Register of the Parish-Church where they were born, and perhaps, (for the licentiousness of the times makes it a question) baptiz'd.

However, amidst these our just Regrets for a decay'd Religion, and our Expostulations with an Apostate age, we must not forget to thank God, that there are some thousands left in our *Israel*, that hold fast their *Profession*, that frequent God's *House*, that attend holy *Offices*, who forsake not the *Priest*, and who wait constantly and reverently upon God in his *Ordinances*.



And yet to these I must say, that these bodily Attendances and outward Reverences, and solemn Exercises of worship, though very commendable, very necessary, yet are not alone sufficient, unless Themselves also be attended with a holy and strict Life.

Matth. 23. 23. These are but the *Mint* and *Cumin* of Religion; 'tis Justice and Charity that are the *Magnalia*, the great things of Christ's Law; which are by all means to be done, and yet those others too not to be left undone.

Matth. 5. 16. Further, supposing that our *Devotions* both in Temple and Cloister be never so earnest, our *Intentions* never so fixt, and our *Zeal* never so flagrant; yet those flames must break out from the Altars of our Hearts into our Actions; and thus our *light to shine*, that men may see our good works, I and feel the benefit of them too; that they being warm'd with our Fire, and inlightned with our Light, may glorifie our heavenly Father.

John 13. 35. To sum up all; 'tis a *Christian conversation* must truly intitle us Disciples of Christ. By this, says he, shall ye be known to be my Disciples, if ye love one another, and if ye keep my Commandments.

John 8. 31.

II. And this will serve for Answer too to *Those* we have next to deal with, who think it enough barely to *Believe*, and take *Faith* alone to be the only Gospel-term, and of it self Allsufficient for Salvation.

But these are much mistaken in the Notion and Nature of a right *Faith*, who Christen a strong *Fancy*, or a rash *Presumption*, by the name of *saving Faith*; who, when they have wrought themselves into a sturdy Perswasion of their own Estate, and of God's love to them in *Christ*; in despite of Scripture-rules, and the whole tenor of the Gospel, think they have nothing else to do, (having once conquered that difficulty) but to make a peremptory Conclusion with themselves, that they are true Believers, and consequently belong to God's Election, and are therefore fully assur'd, that maugre all their sins or whatever Temptations of doubt to the contrary, God's Decrees being Immutable, they cannot possibly miscarry, they shall never be moved.

I must confess, This at first sight looks somewhat like an *Heroick Faith*, that can by its own Strength, without any other ground to rely upon, bear up it self to such a daring Confidence: but surely if this were All required of us, only to *Believe lustily*; Heaven would be so easie a Purchase, that I cannot imagine how any one should miss of it. If *Fancy* might give a man an Interest in the Felicities of the other Life, and *Presumption* make out his Assurances; there's no one so ill a friend to himself, no one sure of so *melancholy* a constitution, of so *phlegmatick* a temper, but might be prevail'd with to entertain *sanguin* hopes: no one, I say, if that were *all*, who would not bid fair for so easie and rich a purchase.

But certainly this unreasonable certainty of these *Fiduciaries* is a great and dangerous Mistake, and will prove in the end but a fond Conceit, and an overweening Distemper.

Hebr. 11. For though *Faith* be an Excellent and Illustrious Grace, and famous for its Atchievements, as the Author to the *Hebrews* has set it forth with its deserved *Encomiums*, and I can fairly allow it all the Powers and Privileges it may justly challenge; yet the same Author has taught us to prefer another active Grace, even *Charity* before it; since, besides that *Faith*, being a Grace appropriate to our mortal state, will be kept out of Heaven,

1 Cor. 13. 13.

Heaven, whereas Charity shall be still imploy'd at once, and Rewarded to all Eternity: I say, besides this, those very Offices and Kindnesses which our *Faith* does us in order to Salvation, we owe as much to *Charity*; for that *Faith* brings us up to Heaven-gates, and there (as I said but now) is to take her leave: this she does being mounted upon the Wings of *Love*.

Let *Faith* be the great Instrumental cause in this business, 'tis *Charity* puts virtue into that Instrument, that actuates and impregnates all its Powers to saving purposes. So the Apostle tells us, 'tis a *Faith working* Gal. 5. 6. by *Love*; or if you will *inoperum*, acted, possessed, and inspirited by Love.

True *Faith* then is no unactive Principle, no idle sedentary Perswasion, that it will be thus and thus with us, but a stirring grace that purges and purifies the Heart, the source of actions, and works by *Love*, by Acts 15. 9. real Evidences making out the Assurances it begets in us.

He that would be sure of his Justification by *Faith*, must first be sure to justify his *Faith* by his Works; and this is that S. James with great earnestness disputes; *Shew me*, says he, *thy faith by thy works*, and if it do not appear and exert it self in such Vital Acts, positively concludes it Dead. James 2. 17.

Those then that look upon *Predestination* as a Lottery, and with a bold Conceit, and an airy Fancy, which they miscall *Faith*, think their Condition becomes absolutely good, when they can but persuade themselves to think it is so, and have nothing else to shew for their Confidence, will, I fear, if Scripture be right, find Themselves at last sadly disappointed, and their vain Hopes in the end miserably blanked.

But some may say, the *Just shall live by his faith*, that is, shall be saved by it. Right; but then 'tis the *Just* person, the righteous man, that shall do so, *that is*, he that does justly, and is such a one as the *Psalmist* here describes; for *Faith* without this is Dead, the Apostle has told us; and no man can live by a Principle, which itself hath no life in it. Hab. 2. 4. Rom. 1. 17.

III. Now if *Faith* will not do, much less can *Opinion*, which is of a lower Allay. If *fides quâ credimus*, the pretended *Grace of Faith* without good Actions be insufficient; then *fides quam credimus*, the *Doctrine of Faith*, be it what it will, cannot secure us. If those Passions of the Heart and Raptures of Spirit, which raise some men to such a pitch of Assurance, fall short and miscarry, then it cannot be imagined that any *Systeme* of Notions swimming in the Brain should bear us out, and help us to attain our end.

And taking *Faith* in this sense for an *Opinion* or *Perswasion* of Judgment, 'tis wonderful, and no less doleful to think, into what a multiplicity of *Faiths* we of this Church, of these late years, are broken and crumbled.

For if *Heresie* and *Schism* be of themselves in their own nature damning sins, as the Apostle sets them down in the black List of Works of the flesh, that incapacitate a man for Heaven; how those men, who depart from our Ancient Establishments, can make that very *separation* of theirs a character of *Godliness*, and expect to be saved for those very things, which do actually put them into a Damnable state, is to me a Riddle; nor do I know, what They may think of themselves; but I heartily pity their ignorance and zeal to boot. Gal. 5. 20.

Yet to see with what Confidence *dissents* are managed, would almost make a Considering man to stagger, had not he clear *Scripture*, and Primitive *Practice*, and unbiaſſed *Reason* to stand upon, and keep him on his legs.

There's no Ingenuous man can dislike a modest inquiry and an humble endeavour of Satisfaction even in Private Persons in matters of *Religion*; since God has indued Mankind with Reason mainly for this very purpose; and *Religion*, as 'tis the grand Interest of the World, so 'tis the particular Concern of every man in the World. But for any parties of men to overthrow *Foundations*, to decry Apostolical *Functions* and *Institutions*, to oppose themselves to the *Authority* of Church and State, and above all to hazard the *Peace* and *Safety* of their native *Countrey*; not to say, how Ungrateful and Unhandsom they are to bespatter and defame that *Reformation* which was purchased with the Sweat, and Tears, and Blood of our Progenitors; and all this to bring in a *New nothing*, that the *Dissenters* themselves will never be agreed upon: I say, this were such a design, as the *Alcoran* indeed may justifie, but *Christian Religion* never can be taught to own.

And such are our *Fractions* and *Divisions* at this time, so irreconcilable the *Animosities* which arise from them, that they appear to me not to signifie so much as to threaten Ruin.

Travellers that have gone over the *Alps*, tell us, the *Mules* they make use of in that dangerous passage, are so opiniative and self-will'd a creature, that if they have not their head given them, they will go near to throw both Themselves and their Riders down the Precipice. But such is the humour of our Discontents, that let the *Government* use a straight or a slack rein, whether they have or not have that *liberty* they call for, we are to expect publick distractions.

Now what is the *Subject* of these *Differences*? Is it Matter of Salvation? No sure. Not to examin Particulars, let *Presbytery*, *Independency*, *Anabaptism*, *Quakerism*, &c. be what they will be; let every one think well of his own. This I dare lay down for a *Position* in the general, that there are some *Forms* and *Opinions*, which of themselves may damn a man; I mean such as are taken up out of an *Heretical* pride or *Schismatical* humour of separation, as I noted before; let them look to That: but that there is no *Form* or *Opinion* whatsoever, be it never so Perfect, never so Exact to Scripture-Rules, that simply and of it self can save any man; and we must look to This.

Wherefore it concerns, even those that are *Orthodox* in Judgment, that conform with the *Doctrine* and *Discipline* of the Church, to see that they second good *Opinions* with good *Actions*, and live up to their *Form* in the *Power* of Godliness.

2 Tim. 3. 5

For though the *Form* may be enough to secure us from those two great sins of *Hereſie* and *Schism*; yet if we deny the *Power* thereof, there are many other as great sins as these, that we shall be in no less danger of; nor will that our Innocence from those two be any excuse to us, if we be found guilty of other miscarriages.

IV. Again, if a settled *Form* is not enough, which at the worst, be it what it will be, has somewhat of Regularity in it; what shall we say to those whose whole *Religion* is built upon uncertainty, and whose main Principle is *Irresolution*? who yesterday were wedded to one *Opinion*, to day Espouse another, and to morrow possibly (as a *new light* may guide



guide them) may embrace a third; that being acted by a giddy and restless spirit, are always to *seek*, and think it lawful to shift their *Religion* as oft as they do their Cloaths, and scarce ever sleep twice in the same Mind.

If this *Munster*-congregation must be call'd a Church, 'tis not as *S. John* in the *Revelation* hath compared her to a *Woman clothed with the Sun*, but with the *Moon*, in a perpetual course of changes. Rev. 12. 1.

And yet (which is horrid to think) this Mutability and Unsteadiness of judgment they boldly impute to the blessed *Spirit*, and pretending his immediate Guidance, lay aside *Scripture* as a Rule out of date, and fancy themselves advanc'd to that Perfection, that they need not the help of *Ordinances*, which now they look upon as *beggerly Rudiments*. Gal. 4. 9.

They in their wild Ramble, and in the Latitude of that *Ecliptick*-line they walk in, take themselves to be as free from all Obligations to any *Forms of Worship*, as the *Primitive Christians* were from the bondage of the *Ceremonial Law*.

Thus this *sect* hath indeed lit upon *Liberty of Conscience* in the full Comprehension of it, which the Rest being more strait laced, and fearing to speak out, least they should bring in the whole Gang along with them, do but mince upon the matter.

Suppose now the *Magistrate* were free in his own conscience, and with his convenience too, to allow such a *freedom* as this; nay, suppose further, that (as the *Scripture* expresses it, the *Truth* it self had even in this sense *set them free*,) this *Freedom* of it self would not save them. For as the bare Attendance upon any the best *Form*, will stand in no stead, unless we mind also the great Duties of Christianity: So neither would the *Freedom* and Exemption from all *Forms* any whit advantage any one in his spiritual state, without he keep himself free from all great sins too, and miscarriages of Life. John 8. 32.

And that such a *Liberty* does not make men Impeccable; nay, that it doth betray them to the most outrageous sins, the History of *Munster* is a fowl evidence, where, however they pretended to the *Spirit*, they committed such horrible wickednesses, as were not only repugnant to the *Word of God*, but abhorrent from the Principles of human *Reason*, and the common Instincts of *Nature*.

'Tis true, as they say, God is to be sought after; but then we must seek him in a regular way, and where he may be found, in his *Sanctuary*, in his *Ordinances*, where his Spirit is in a more especial manner present and assisting; and though the *Way* which leads to Life be narrow, and Few there be that find it, we must not therefore leave the *Church-road*, and step aside into by-paths of our own, that we may fancy there-upon our own selves to be those *Few*, or imagine that the being out of our *Way* is the way to find it. Matth. 7. 14.

In short; The *Holy Ghost* is a *Spirit of Truth*, and by consequence cannot possibly contradict himself, since one part of the contradiction is necessarily false; that is, he cannot suggest any thing that is contrary to *Scripture-rule*, since *Scriptures* are nothing but his own Dictates. Wherefore to ascribe enormous, unjustifiable actions, such as the *Murder of Kings or fellow-Subjects*, *Disobedience to Authority*, *Rapine*, *Oppression*, *Slander*, *Malice*, and the like, to the Impulses of the blessed *Spirit*, is *Blasphemy* in the highest. 1 John 5. 6.

*Scripture* is the surest Touch-stone in this case to try the *Spirits*, whether they be of God; and if any Spirit do not agree with That, we may peremptorily resolve 'tis a lying Spirit. 1 John 4. 7.

To

John 4. 24.

To conclude this Head ; what the modestest of this sort object, that *God is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and truth*, is most True. The *Letter* without the *Spirit*, the *Form* without the *Power*, will do us no good ; nor bodily Worship signifie ought without the inward adoration of the Mind ; but yet neither *Letter*, nor *Form*, nor *Body* are to be laid aside in this business ; but the joyning of both together, *Letter* and *Spirit*, *Form* and *Power*, *Body* and *Spirit*, it is that makes up the compleat Truth of worship.

John 5. 39.

The Spirit of God is inshrined in the *Letter* of holy Scripture, and thus our Saviour commands us to *search the Scriptures*, that is, to find out the *Spirit* of them, in the *Letter* of them. *Search the Scriptures* in the letter of them ; *for in them*, that is, in the Spirit of them, ye hope to have everlasting Life.

So again, the *Spirit* of man (as the Original expresses it, *Gen. 6. 3.*) is *sheath'd* in his body, and as God is the Maker of both, so he expects to be serv'd with both ; so then our *inward Worship* must be made out and evidenced by *outward Acts* of the body, lifting up the eyes in Prayer, bowing the knee in token of Humility, but above all extending the *Hands* to works of *Charity*, &c.

V. For neither in the next place can I approve the ordinary mode of some that pretend to more then ordinary piety, to place all *Religion* in the *Ear*, that take up so much of their time in *Hearing*, that they have scarce leasure to *Practise*, or else perhaps sit down in an acquiescence in that single Duty, and for all others do *in utramque aurem dormire*, give no ear to the things they hear, and the Duties that are preached to them.

Rom. 10. 17.

And this peradventure upon the *solifidian* account too, that *Faith* is to come that way, and if they once arrive at *That*, no more for any other Qualification.

But as *Faith* enters in at the *Ear*, so unless it sink down thence into the *Heart*, and there *work by Love*, and work it self out at the *Hands* too in Acts of *Charity*, 'tis no right *Faith*.

Matth. 11. 12.

To borrow that borrow'd speech of our Saviour's, if the violences of our Zeal must storm Heaven, and *take it by force*, we must climb the Walls with our *Hands*, that great instrument of Action, as the Philosopher calls it.

Rom. 1. 18.

That, which afterwards the *Roman* luxury made a Badge of Gentility, was at first look't upon as the Reproach of a slavish condition, to have *fenestratas aurés*, to wear *Jewels* in their ears ; it having been the fashion of those effeminate Nations they conquer'd and took captive : And certainly God never intended his *Word* for a Jewel to be hung and worn there, and so to be *held in unrighteousness*.

It is observ'd, that the most dull and sluggish Creature Nature has befriended with *ears* of the largest size ; and I wish it were not true, that some of the most diligent *Hearers* are as slow-paced as that *animal* in their practice.

Exod. 21. 6.

Why *Libellers* and *perjured* persons are sentenced to the loss of that part which did not the Offence, I cannot readily tell ; but sure 'tis just with God so to deal with such constant unprofitable *bearers*, as seem to have had their *ears bor'd* at the door-posts of God's house, that make so much Conscience of *Hearing*, and none at all of *Doing*, that have heard some hundreds of *Sermons*, and never yet liv'd one : I say, 'tis just with God

God to take from such their *hearing*, as he often does; when, as the Prophet expresses it, *Occalluerunt aures*, their *Ears are grown Dull and Thick and Heavy of hearing*, and are judicially deafened with the *Ordinances*, as those people, who live neer the *Cataracts of Nile*, are with the constant noise of the *Water-falls*. Isa. 5. 10.

*Herod* himself out-heard such hearers by out-doing them; for he heard his bold Reprover gladly, and did many things for his sake, though he would not for all that part with his beloved lust, which shew'd his hypocrisy. Mark 6. 20.

You see then, 'tis not Constant, no, nor Affectionate *Hearing* will serve, no, nor *Critical* censorious hearing, though that too seem to have something of Judgment in it and Care, for which the Noble *Beræans* are commended. Acts 17. 11.

'Tis grown a common fault even in some of the best *Auditors*; Even they have somewhat of the *itching ears*; they have gotten *aures Atticæ*, and affect Novelty, if not of Opinion, yet at least of Dress; and plain, though never so wholsom, Discourses will not go down. 2 Tim. 4. 3.

We are it should seem sated with the Bread of life, and this *Manna* will not please our wanton palate, as it falls in the ordinary Ministration, unless it be served up with gay or poyant expressions.

Be not mistaken, He that fed multitudes with a few *barly Loaves*, can with plain *Homilies* and wholsom (though never so homely) Discourses feed humble souls to everlasting Life. John 6. 9.

We come hither to attend an Ordinance of *God*, and not the Performance of *Man*, and the business is manag'd not by the skill and ability of the Speaker, but by the Power of the *Spirit*, which cooperates with our Ministry. There are divers *Gifts* and different *Ministrations*, but one and the same *Spirit*, who worketh all in all, and can order all so as to edifie withall. 1 Cor. 12. 4.

I hope we do all, that come into such places as this, with sincerity handle the *Mysteries* we are about, according to that *Talent* God has given us, to his Glory, and he can and will (if we *hear* as we ought to hear) bless and succeed the meanest *Instrument* he employs in this his great work.

Wherefore (I have the *Apostles* authority in the like case of himself, and *Apollos*, and *Cephas*, for what I am now going to say) this humour of *censuring* the Pulpit, of preferring one to another, and having Persons in admiration, is a spice of *Schism* at least, if not, as our case now stands, one of the main grounds of it. 1 Cor. 1. 12.

If then men would *hear* with profit, they must lay aside such Prejudices, as knowing that whatsoever he be that *Plants or Waters*, 'tis *God* that gives the Increase. 1 Cor. 3. 6.

And yet when they have heard in the best manner they can, that is not all; for *Christ* has told us expressly, that they which hear his words and do them not, are but foolish builders, and lay their foundation in the sand. Matth. 7. 26.

VI. 'Tis not then lining the *Ears*, no nor tipping the *Tongue* with religious Discourses will do the business.

*Religion* is now made one of the *Artes sermocinales*, a Talkative mystery, an Art not to govern the *Mind*, and to regulate the *Actions*, but to frame and fashion *Discourse*.



Nay, and the best sort of talking, I mean *Preaching* (it should be so) is now every bodies work ; no one so simple, but might lately, and did, set up, and perhaps holds on the trade still, and the more ignorant and unfit, the more confident and venturous, (for likely those two ill qualities go together) and possibly the more Taking.

*England* never had more reason then it has had of late years, to be called the *Preaching Island* ; it was once our Glory , and now is become our Reproach. Truth is, there are some have preach'd so very much, and so very ill, that they have preached *Preaching* it self, (I might also say, the *Gospel* it self) out of credit, out of the Kingdom. I wish with all my heart they may be preached into credit again.

Far be it from me to envy any one that Faculty ; nay , as *Moses* in the case of *Eldad* and *Medad*, I could wish that *all the Lord's people were prophets*.  
Numb. 11. 29.

But what ? shall there be no Order in the affairs, no distinction of parts, in the body of the *Church* ? If all turn *Preachers*, where are the *Hearers* ? If every one in a *Regiment*, that fancies himself an expert Souldier, take upon him to command, and to be an Officer, who is there to obey ? what place is there for Discipline ? If every body, that thinks himself fit to manage State-affairs (as I dare undertake there are very few that do not think so) should take place in *Parliament*, and thrust into *Council*, what would become of the Government ?

Many shall say to *Christ* in that day, *Lord, we have prophesied in thy Name* ; to whom (he tells us) he shall answer, *I know you not* ; as if he had said, You had no Commission from me, I sent you not.  
Mat. 7. 22, 23.

Nay, and those too that have a Commission, a Lawful Call, had need to look to themselves too, least while they preach to others, they themselves be cast away.  
1 Cor. 9. 27.

VII. But if *Preaching* will not do, *Prayer* sure will ; for *that* has an almighty power in it ; *that* is *David's Key*, which opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens.  
Rev. 3. 7.

Right ; but 'tis not the *Key* alone, but the dexterity and strength of the Hand which manages it, does the work. Good Works are the *Wards* of this *Key* ; and if those be wanting, 'tis not a *Key* so much as a *Picklock*, and Heaven-gates are not so to be attempted.

*Prayer*, 'tis true, is a most excellent and useful Gift, if it be in a good hand and well used ; but if it be but a *Gift*, and not a *Grace* too, as there's much difference betwixt the *Gift* and the *Grace of Prayer*, then we must know that this *χρησμος*, this common *Gift* has been, and is bestow'd upon wicked as well as righteous persons, has been, and is still, design'd for bad as well as good Purposes ; to advance *Faction*, to insinuate and promote *Sedition*, and not alway to stir up *Devotion*.

'Tis commonly said, that *Witches* cannot pray ; but that other eminent Instruments of *Satan* have been furnished with prodigious Abilities in this kind, to carry on his Designs, is notoriously manifest.

The *Euchites* of old were reckon'd up in the Catalogue of *Hereticks*, a simple sort of people, that by misunderstanding of that Text which bids us *Pray always*, thought themselves oblig'd to a perpetual Gaping and an unwearied Lip-labour ; whereas the meaning of that place is to injoin a regular constancy in Prayer, or as some Learned men tell us, the *juge Sacrificium*, the constant use of *Liturgy* and set-Forms of prayer at the set appointed Times and Hours of prayers, at least the Morning and the Evening Sacrifice.  
1 Thess. 5. 17.

But

But we need go no further for Instances of this kind then a late History in our own Chronicles. *Hacket*, who in the time of Queen *Elizabeth* was executed in *Cheapside*, had so great a plenty of these *extempore* effusions; and so rare a knack in managing them, that some of his Complices, *Arbington* and *Coppinger*, confest, 'twas the *Raptures* and *Extasies* of his Prayers that transported them, and won them over to be his followers; who yet, when he saw at last that he must dye, from Praying fell to downright Cursing and Blaspheming, and so went off, Wretch as he was.

From this and the like Instances it has been a wonder to me, that in this late licentious Age, when the multitude has had that breez of Religion upon them, some audacious fellows of this kind, some *Gifted Brethren*, as they call them, have not mislead them to far worse Inconveniences then have yet befalln us; though those were too too bad, they being unparallel'd, and such as never had before, either for Horrid Contrivance or Effronted Villany, been acted upon the Theater of any Nation.

'Tis not then the *Gift of Prayer* that is a *nevermore*, an infallible Mark and a certain Character of true *Godliness*; since it may be used in a subservience to villanous Designs, and to countenance and varnish the fowlest Actions.

No; nor is the *Grace of Prayer* it self without good works sufficient. 'Tis the *Prayer of the Righteous avails much*; and hereupon 'twas that *Moses* his hands being held up did such eminent service in the fight, though there were other hands too at work in hewing out the Victory; and *Amalek* was fought down as well as prayed down. James 5. 16.  
Exod. 17. 12.

*Pythagoras* in his golden Verses, sets down this as one of his Precepts to his Scholars, *Ἐργάζεσθαι καὶ προσεύχεσθαι*. Before you go to work, first say your prayers; where his Commentator *Hierocles*, excellent man, having shewn the necessity of *Prayer* and *Industry* both; for the success of any human Affair, he thus explains the Rule. You must pray (says he) with that Earnestness, as if God were to do all for you; and yet Work with that Care and Industry, as if you were to do all your self. Most excellent saying, and fit to have dropt from the Pen of a Christian Father; and that which to my apprehension doth in a word cut in two that inexplicable knot, at which *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, and before them some ancient *Philosophers* have tooth and nail tug'd so long.

We must *Work* then as well as *Pray*; we cannot promise our selves a Blessing and Success in our Work without *Prayer*; nor will Praying alone do without *Working*; the Hands must not only be lifted up in *Prayer*, but they must also be stretch'd forth to do *Works* of Justice and Charity.

We shall shut up this with what our Saviour tells us, *Not every one* (says he) *that says Lord, Lord, Matth. 7. 21.* (that were an easie Lesson, and would quickly be learnt) *shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he which does the will of my Father which is in Heaven.*

I must now crave your Charity as well as Patience, that I may not be misunderstood. I do very well know, that *Hearing*, and *Preaching*, and *Praying* are sacred Ordinances of Christ, and grand Duties of Christian Religion; and I have, as I ought to have, a very reverend thought and esteem for them in the right Use of them. 'Tis the Abuse of them that I am now speaking against; and you know, that how much the

better any thing is, the Corruption and abuse of it is so much the worse.

And yet such is the corruption of Humane Nature, that Those things which God has design'd for our greatest advantage, to be Instruments of Piety, Means of Grace, and Helps to a good Life, we are too too apt, by perverting them from their right uses, to turn them unto our greatest disadvantage.

However, if I do fall under the censure of some that are not well acquainted with this kind of *truths*; I must desire them to remember, that what I have discours'd upon each of these *Heads*, has been back'd with *Scripture* and *Reason*, and our own convincing *Experience*.

VIII. In the *last* place we come to *Those*, who, as they are, I think, fewer in Number, so they appear in their Principle less Dangerous than any of the rest; the *Well-willers*; who rest upon their good *Intentions*, and take it for a sufficient ground for them to *Hope well*, because they *Mean well*.

Psal. 14. 1.  
Rom. 3. 12.

And truly, in my opinion, this sort of *Well-meaning* people, wherever they may be met with, is to be cherished; for since we are grown to that pass in this corrupt Age, that not only (as the *Psalmist* says) *there is none that dooth good, no not one*; but generally men are of that design, that they care not what wrong they do to one another, or to the Publick, so they may serve their own Interests and Advantages: 'tis some kind of *Vertue* not to be extremely Vitious, and in comparison a *Piety* not to be wicked overmuch.

1 Pet. 3. 11.  
Isa. 1. 16.

Yet this harmless humour of *Meaning well* is not enough to approve a man's spiritual State, to acquit his *Obligations*, or to ascertain his *Expectations*. For he that bids us *eschew Evil*, does immediately subjoyn that we must follow and hold fast that which is Good. It will be no good account, not to have done *Evil*, unless we make it appear that we have been doing *Good* too; since the Non-*Commission* of great sins will not excuse our *Omission* of great Duties.

In the busie Commonwealth of *Bees*, the Drone without a sting, as she has no Weapon for Mischief, so wanting a Tool for Employ, is deservedly cashier'd the Hive.

Further, good *Intentions* are much of the nature of *Promises*; a Promise being nothing else but a declar'd Intention: Now *Promises*, if never perform'd, are so far from signifying any thing, that the kindness of making them is not so pleasing to God, as the disappointment in the non-Performance is highly provoking.

For there is great difference betwixt such *Promises* we make to God, and those we may make to Men. A *Promise* we make to a man may be Gratuitous without any previous obligation, and unlimited as to the time of its Performance; so that if it be made good one time or other, *per se* or *per alium*, it may serve the turn. But these *Promises* we make to God of Amendment of Life and of New Obedience, are due debt, even before we make them; and if we do not set immediately about them, we know not whether we ever shall have opportunity and power to do them; Life being so uncertain, that we cannot call the next minute our own, and this being a business that cannot be left to an Executor's care.

And it is upon this very account, for our own sakes, and out of infinite kindness to the souls of men, that God so passionately resents our delays, because they are so extremely hazardous to our selves.

Indeed fair *Purposes*, pious *Resolutions*, and honest *Meanings* are but the



the *Barriers* and start of our Christian course : Now he that sits down and takes up his rest here, shall never arrive at the *Goal*, never come to his Journeys end ; and it were a fond thing for any one to design the finishing his *Race*, where he's to begin it.

However, there is some Hope, that those who are thus provided, may be perswaded, one time or other, to *set out*, and then to *go forward*, and so to *hold on* in God's ways, the greatest difficulty being at first setting forth ; and when that is once over, when we are once engaged in a course of *Vertue*, then the Repetition of *Just* and *Charitable Acts* will beget good *Habits* ; and the *Custom* of doing well, (as 'tis in the contrary of doing ill,) will in time come to be familiar and natural to us : The worst of *Sinners* and the best of *Saints* agreeing in this, that it was tract of *Time* and assiduous *Practise* that improved the *Graces* of the one, and hightned the *Vices* of the other ; and then after they are thus confirmed by *Time* and *Practice*, it will be almost as hard for such an one, being assisted and strengthened by Divine *grace*, (which is never wanting to them that seek it, and use it) to fall back from his vertuous course, as 'tis to reclaim a hardened impenitent sinner from the error of his ways.

Now may God the Father of Mercies, and God the Son our gracious Redeemer, and God the blessed Spirit, by his Grace so prevent, excite, assist, inable and strengthen us, that we may not rely upon any of those lame half-way Pretences ; but come up to a serious Ingagement and a fixt Establishment in the ways of Holiness and Righteousness, that we may add to our Profession Practice, to Faith Obedience, to the Form the Power of Godliness. And that we may so Hear and Preach and Pray and Resolve, as to be not only Hearers, but Doers of the Word, and so may every one of us be blessed in his Deed. Amen. James 1.25.

## Of the true Marks of Religion.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* before the Family, in *July 1671*.

The *XV. Psalm*, the last Verse, the last words of the Verse.

—*He that doth these things shall never be moved.*



FROM these words we gather'd *three Propositions*; the first of which, that *Religion consists in Action*, we lately dispatch'd, and prov'd it by overthrowing all those *false grounds* of Confidence, which popular Mistake makes use of to their own hurt, and settling the business of *Religion* upon its proper *Basis*, upon *good works*; yet with that caution too, that we do not rely upon those works neither, but when we have

Luke 17. 10.

done all these things, we are still to acknowledge our selves unprofitable servants, as doing no more than we are bound to do. Our second Observation was, *That the Righteous and Charitable Christian is the truly Godly man, one that has the fairest title to Grace and Glory.*

And this *Proposition* we shall prove partly by some *common Arguments*, which, as in the general they prove all Piety to consist in Practice, so being particularly applied to Works of Righteousness and Charity do more convincingly inforce it; partly by some that are more *peculiar* to Charity, as it stands in contra-distinction to Piety, strictly so called, and Sobriety, that is, to the Duties we owe to God and to our selves.

I. Those *common arguments* are the same I lately mention'd, and did but mention; and they are taken,

1. From the *Subject of Religion*, the Heart or Mind and Soul of man; that Actions, but especially charitable Actions, are the best expressers of the Mind, and the shrewdest discoverers of the Heart. Now the *Heart* in matters of Religion is all in all; so that our piety, if it be not practical, and in an especial manner conversant in Works of Charity, it may very well be suspected, 'tis not hearty, 'tis not real, but a meer formality of Hypocrisie.

2. From the *Nature of the Covenant* betwixt God and us; that Actions, but above all, charitable Actions are the condition on our part. God has not oblig'd himself to do all upon us and for us, but requires us to *work out our own Salvation*. And 'twas to this very end that Christ died, as to seal the Covenant, so to purchase to himself a *peculiar people*, *zealous of good Works*, and those to be sure Works of Charity.

Phil. 2. 12.

Tit. 2. 14.

3. From

3. From the *Manner of procedure* at the great day of Accounts, when eternal retributions shall be adjusted to men according to their Works; and *David* speaks it as a remark of Divine Mercy as well as Justice, that he shall judge every man so; and the chiefest and indeed only works there, that will intitle men to reward, will be the Works of Charity. Psal 62. 12.

1. *First* then, that the *Heart* is the Seat and Source of spiritual as well as natural Life, that that is the chief and almost only *Subject of Religion*, would be needless for me to go about to prove, Scripture every where being full of such expressions; *My Song give me thy heart*, and *Above all keeping look to thy heart*; and our Saviour summing up the first Table, that we must *love God with all our heart*; and the second not much unlike, that a man *love his Neighbour as himself*, and that surely is heartily too. Prov. 23. 26.  
Prov. 4. 23.  
Mat. 22. 37, 39.

What our Saviour says, *Where the treasure is there is the heart also*, Matth. 6. 21. is as great a truth, if it be read backward; Where the heart is, there also is the treasure. So that a man may know by the beating of his heart, what his state is; and to know how his heart beats, (he needs not go so far,) the pulse of the arteries in his Hand will shew.

If there be Life at *heart*, there will be motion all the *body* over; every faculty and function will be at work, and in that proportion of vigour and strength, as the Heart imparts heat and spirits to the rest of the body. If the *Soul* gasp and pant after God, if there be a true Fear and Love of God rooted there, it will shew it self in the *tongue*, in the *eyes*, in the *ears*, in the *hands*; and the Affections will work themselves out at every member of the Body with suitable actions.

For one to pretend he *loves* God, and yet not keep his Commandments, that he *fears* God, and yet boldly ventures upon sin, which he knows is so highly displeasing to God, is a shrew'd sign that his *heart* is not right with God. Such a man does but prevaricate with God; if he be in earnest, he will shew it in his actions.

Now he that *prays* frequently, and *reads* much, and is a constant Church-goer, and keeps the *Sabbath* carefully, and shews a reverence to Sacred things, and orders his Conversation well as to Rules of *Temperance*, he gives some good proofs of his *Piety*. Yet all this does not make out the sincerity of the *Heart*, so much as works of *Charity* do; and I shall give but this one reason for it:

There are but *two Masters* we can serve, *God* and *Mammon*, *God* and *Interest*; and their service is incompatible; we cannot serve them both. Now a man may do all that I spoke of before, *Pray*, and *Read*, and go to *Church*, and live *Soberly*, and yet be a *Mammonist* in his heart and in his life too; but a true genuine *Charity* is the distinctive Character of a right Servant of God. Matth. 6. 24.

This it is which makes a perfect discovery of the *Heart*, in that it more directly thwarts *Interest*, and therein lies the great Trial of a man's spirit; that's the Byas, which carries most men of the World to one side; and to this worldly design acts of *Piety* and *Sobriety* may be made subservient.

Some, whose gain is their *godliness*, make great conscience of an *Oath*, 1 Tim 6. 5. that they may have the better Advantage to couzen you with a *Lye*.

*Zeal,*



*Zeal*, we know, was the face and vizard of *Rebellion*, and serv'd to make prosperous Villany awful to the People; and 'twas a thriving Policy of the late times to appear very religious; when seeming godliness was a necessary qualification for a Publick knave: As if they meant to compound with God to be injurious to their Neighbours.

Matth. 7. 16. Again, the *Heretick* puts on a demure carriage, to make his Doctrines go down the glibber, but says our Saviour, *By their fruits ye shall know them*. What fruits? their malicious and envious carriage. For a Wolf, though he be in sheeps cloathing, is a Wolf still.

The very *Atheist* in his own defence obliges himself to strict rules; for expecting no other Life after this, he designs to enjoy this as much as may be, and to make it last as long as he can; and so far he's in the right, when he takes *Temperance* to be the way.

Time was when Religion in the *Levitical* service was a costly thing, when Sin-offerings and Peace-offerings were to be fetched out of the Flocks and the Herds; but now men are apt to thank God 'tis not so. A *Sermon* and a *Prayer* with some men does all the business of Religion. The long *Grace* at the Miser's Table must excuse his *Charity* at the door.

The *second Table* has in it the chargeable duties. Many are forward in their way to give God his due, but the things which are *Cæsar's* come hard from them.

The *Rabbinical* Dialect has found out a pretty word for *money*, they call it דמים *blood*; and so from worldlings it comes like drops of Life-blood.

Matth. 19. 21. *Sell all and give to the poor*, is a hard Precept. What must I do my self then? This is the ready way to make my self one of the number.

Bid some men not *covet*, and you had as good bid them not live.

*Truth* is a dangerous Commodity, a kind of Counterband-goods, and not to be utter'd but with great caution.

*Loyalty* has forfeited many a man's Life and Estate, and may for ought we know, do so again.

An *Usurer* must make the best advantage of his Money; and 'tis hard to perswade him that that's done by giving it away.

Thus we see 'tis *Charity* that mainly crosses Interest, and so shews the very bottom of the *Heart*.

Jer. 17. 9. And 'tis pity, (such is the deceitfulness of the *Heart*) that this noble Vertue should be employed to by-ends, and *Charity* it self should prove sometimes a Cheat, a Counterfeit. And yet so we found it among the

Matth. 6. 2. *Pharisees*, who by sound of *Trumpet* did *dare munus*, made a shew, when they gave Alms.

Matth. 23. 14. But theirs was no *Charity*; who, like *Cæsar's* being liberal after a plunder, swallow'd Widows houses first, and then disgorg'd a pittance of Alms to the poor Orphans.

However *Christ* tells us, they went not without their reward; they had what they look'd for; fools, as they were, to look for no better then the airy applause of the mistaken multitude.

Matth. 6. 20. Happy they that so bestow their *Charity* as to lay up their *Treasure* in Heaven; for if the *Heart* be where the *Treasure* is, and *Charity* be the laying of it up in Heaven, then the man, when he quits this World, will be sure there to find both his *Heart* and his *Treasure* together.

And

And though in this case the *Trumpet* is not to be used, nor praise of men to be fought; yet 'tis fit our good Works should be so done, *that men may see them, and glorifie not us, but our Father which is in Heaven.* Matth. 5. 16.

2. *Secondly*; The *Covenant* of Grace obliges us to Action. That *Good Works* upon this account are absolutely necessary, not only *necessitate præcepti*, as they are commanded, but *medij* too, as they are the appointed means to bring us to Heaven, and conditions on our part, without which we must not expect salvation, I might in the *general* shew at large, could I spare time from other business before me.

Let it suffice, if at present I only prove *in particular*, that *These things* here spoken of in this *Psalms*, are to be done.

The *Covenant* was founded in God's mercy to Us; and must on our part be made out in Ours to our Brother.

1 John 4. 11.

The *Sermon upon the Mount*, as it is the *Code* of Evangelical Precepts and Rules, so it may be taken for a just *Commentary* upon this *Psalms*. Herein *Christ* seems to take special care of vindicating the *second Table* from the corrupt Glosses of the *Pharisees*, to clear and heighten the obligations of mutual *Charity*, and to fill up the measures of it; so that it should be pressed down and running over.

*Meekness, Humility, Patience, Peaceableness, Bounty, Love*, and all obliging *Vertues* and *Graces* are the great and the only Instances of *Christian Doctrine*. This the very bottom and ground of *Christianity*; and his beloved Disciple tells us, that our very love to God is to be tried and valued by that love which we have to our Brother. 1 John 4. 7, 8.

*Love to enemies*, a Precept of that transcendent *Charity*, that 'tis not to be met with amongst any of all the *Sects* of Philosophers. *Hierocles* indeed goes high, when he says, *The good man has no enemies*; and truly it appears, methinks to reason, when we do but consider what good use may be made of a hearty enemy, that we are bound not only by *Christian* obligations, but even by pure *Moral* gratitude, to pray for our *Enemies* as well as for our *Friends*, and to bless God for them, as possibly being the greater *Friends* of the two. For as our ordinary *Friends* are apt to teach us, that we ought not to put Confidence in man, so our *Enemies*, if we be but wise and good, as we should be, will drive us to closer Dependences upon God. Matth. 5. 44.

This *Covenant* is so far from obliging us to destroy our *Friends* and *Neighbours*, or our *Governours*, that it bids us be thankful for being undone, pray for Tyrants and Persecutors, and take our very enemies into the *Charity* of our Prayers.

In a word, if we mean to reap any benefit by *Christ*, or by what he has done for us, we must obey him and imitate him, do as he said, and do as he did, that is, in obedience to his *Doctrine*, and in Imitation of his *Example*, do all men all manner of good.

3. *Thirdly*; This will be the Method of the *Last Judgment*. Those that die in the Lord, *their good Works follow them* at least, if they do not go before them. Rev. 14. 13.

'Tis true, our very *Thoughts* will be scan'd, and *Words* will be called to account; but our *Deeds* and *Actions*, like palpable Evidences, will come in of course, and need not be summon'd into the Court.

God will be justified when he judges; and therefore will give Sentence *secundum Allegata & Probata*, according to the *Actions* of men, since their *Thoughts* he alone was conscious to.

For though God may be allowed to be *Judge* and *Witness* both; yet he will so judge every man, by that State and Way and Course of Life, which every one took, that the whole World shall from plain Evictions applaud the Justice of every single Trial.

Now that *Righteousness* and *Charity* will be the grand *Ketmeia*, the main things that will come into Judgment before him, by which every man will either be cast or clear'd at the dreadful Tribunal, is attested with one consent by all holy Writers.

I shall not trouble you with gathering up what lies scatter'd up and down in sacred Writ upon this Head, but shall content my self with that One famous passage *Matth. 25.* from the 31<sup>th</sup> verse to the end; wherein our Saviour (who himself is to be the Judge) tells us in what form he shall proceed, giving us so exact an *Hypotypôsis* and Graphical a Description of the last Judgment, that any man may even now in this Life read his own Destiny aforehand, and, if he will be wise in time, may make out his Evidences for Heaven whilst he is here.

There he tells us What he shall say to those on his *right hand*, what to those on the *left*; and Why. *Come ye blessed of my Father, shall he say to the one, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World; for ye fed the hungry, ye entertain'd the stranger, ye cloathed the naked, ye visited the sick and the prisoner.* But to the other he says, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels; for ye did none of all this; as if the whole stress of mens eternal state lay upon the account of Charity.*

No mention of any other *Duties*, of any other *Sins*. Acts of *Piety* and acts of *Sobriety*, and their contraries, all acts of whatever other *Vertue* or *Vice* are reckon'd and summed up in the Practise or neglect of Works of *Charity*. For so *Christ* takes all upon himself; *inasmuch as ye have done it to any one of the least of these*, says he, *ye have done it unto me.*

Nor is there any Notice taken of faillours and miscarriages in other parts of Religion, if there be but *Charity*; to shew that *Charity covers a multitude of sins*; nor of exercises of *Piety*, or other good Performances, where *Charity* is wanting; to shew that the bare want of *that* is enough for any ones Condemnation, and that every thing else without *that* is but a meer idle pretence.

And then he closes all with the execution of this definitive Sentence, that *These*, that is, the Uncharitable, shall go away into everlasting Punishment; but the *Righteous*, that is, the Charitable, into Life eternal.

1 Cor. 13:8.

Thus, as the *Apostle* tells us, of all our Christian *Graces*, 'tis our *Charity* alone will bear us Company into the other World.

O blessed and vast returns of *Mercy*! when a bit of bread to the *Hungry* shall be rewarded with the hidden *Manna*; when a Cup of cold water shall be recompensed with *rivers of Pleasure*; when he that cloathes the *Naked*, shall himself be cloathed with Immortality; when he that has taken in *Strangers*, shall be received into heavenly Palaces; when the having visited the *Prisoner* shall keep us out of the eternal Dungeon; and our regards to the *Sick* shall be requited with God's salvation.



One would think this Place alone would be enough effectually to move any ones Heart to a zealous Exercise of *Charity*, for which there's no one to mean, be his Condition what it will, but is furnished with abilities in one kind or another :

Especially those that are *Rich*, that abound in this World's good, and see their brethren in want; this is the only way they have to make to themselves Friends of the *Million* of Unrighteousness, that when they fail, they may be received into Everlasting habitations, *Luke 16.9.*

And these are the *Arguments* which lie in *common* to all good Works in general, but do by way of Eminence belong to acts of *Righteousness* and *Charity*.

II. Others there are which do more *peculiarly* belong to *righteous* and *charitable* Actions, as they are distinguished from acts of *Piety* and *Sobriety*; and of those we shall, for brevities sake, name but *three*.

1. That they proceed from a more generous *Principle*.
2. That they are in their *Nature* and Appearance more godlike.
3. That in their *Consequents* and *Effects* they are more beneficial and advantageous to the Publick.

Before I enter upon this *Comparison*, wherein I shall give the Preheminence to *Charity* before *Piety* and *Sobriety*, and on the contrary aggravate Transgressions which are made against the rules of that *Vertue*, and shew them to be much more heinous then those against the other two; I must desire to be fairly understood, that I may not be thought to disparage or discourage *good Works* of any kind, by preferring the Duties we owe to our Neighbour, and by shewing that all others without these are so far from serving a Christians turn, that indeed they are little better then idle pretences, and cannot, unless they be mixt with *Charity*, deserve the name of *good Works*.

And on the other hand, that I may not be lookt upon as one that take upon me the Patronage of any *Sin* in any kind, when I lessen sins of *Indevotion*, and sins of *Intemperance*, compar'd to sins of *Unrighteousness* and *Malice*.

For though we must fairly allow all *vertuous* Practices their due Commendation, and set our selves with an impartial Zeal against all *sin*; yet when we come to weigh *Duties* and *Miscarriages* in the Ballance of the Sanctuary, we must know, there are some sorts of *good Works*, that are of a more absolute and indispensable obligation, and do more naturally capacitate men for the rewards of Bliss, then others; and on the other side there are some *Vices* that have a much greater Damnability in the *Nature* of them, and a more certain Damningness in the *Practice*, and that do more suitably fit, and powerfully dispose the Nature of man for the Company of the Devil and his Angels, then other *Vices* do.

And such *Vertues* are *Righteousness*, *Charity*, *Meekness*, *Humility*, *Truth*, and the like, as they are recounted in this *Psalm*, which respect our Neighbours good; and such *Vices* are *Envy*, *Malice*, *Injustice*, *Pride*, *Falseness*, whereby our Neighbour in his Estate, in his good Name, in his Content, is any way wrong'd or damnified.

Again this may be premised, that in this discourse we consider *Vertues* and *Vices*, and the *actions* which flow from them, *in toto genere*, in the whole kind of them, precisely and abstractly from the particularities of *circumstance* which attend single actions, and may possibly much alter the Case.

1. First then to Examin them in their *Principle*. Acts of *Righteousness* and *Charity* are of a more Noble extraction, and are descended of the Elder house. They are the natural Issues of a strong and venturous *Faith*; and by these things a Christian shews the Bravery of his spirit, that he dare trust God in despite of the World, trust him upon any terms. And such a generous *Trust* and Confidence in God is the best and most considerable part of his Worship.

*Worldlings* themselves are well enough pleas'd with a cheap *Piety*, and can be content to serve God with that which costs them nothing.

*Temperance* is a good useful thrifty Vertue, and in most of those, where it may be found, may peradventure be commended rather as the Result of their own Discretion, then as a Remark of Divine grace; that by this means they keep their Money and preserve their Health, and so escape at once both the Vintners and the Apothecaries Bills.

But if *Piety* go no further then *Sermons*, and *Sabbaths*, and *sacraments*, and *Family Duties*, and seem to be wholly taken up in duties of a Godly life, without minding the Concerns of its Neighbours, this is no right *Piety*; for though that be well, yet 'tis not well enough, but does shrewdly argue Insincerity at the Heart.

Wherefore the Psalmist fronts his *Catalogue* of Duties with that general One, *to walk perfectly*, that is, sincerely; for *Sincerity* is our Christian perfection, and, if that be wanting, *Piety* is a dead heartless thing, and the greatest *Zeal* has in it but a painted fire, which may make a fire shew, but has no heat in it to impart to the Standers by.

And if this be so, what are we to think of the supercilious censorious *Piety* of some, and of the mischievous outrageous *Zeal* of others, who have thought it service to God (if Hearts may be judg'd by Actions,) with intolerable *Pride* and implacable *Malice* to persecute their Neighbour to reproach and ruin?

From what place soever these flames may come, the glowing coles of *Charity* certainly are taken from God's Altar, and were kindled from Heaven.

Again, for a man as to himself to order his Conversation according to Rules of *Temperance*, 'tis well done; but if it be only to save Charges, if it be out of care of Credit or Health, what thanks is it? he has his Reward, and is like to have no other.

But if his *Sobriety* be out of Conscience, then what he saves by retrenching his Vanity and Lust, and cutting off unnecessary Expences, he will freely bestow upon the necessities of the Poor, and be a good Husband for them, and this will turn to his everlasting Account.

Further, for a man to pretend *Piety*, and to act *Injustice*; to appear *Zealous* for the Glory of God, and yet to be *Insincere* in his dealings with Men; to make great Conscience of an *Oath*, and none at all of a *Lie*; to bless God formally, and with the same tongue to slander and revile his Neighbour, is such a *linsey wolsey* *Piety*, as God neither owns in his Word, nor will ever reward in the *World* to come; and the like may be said of the *Sober*, *Unrighteous*, *Uncharitable* man.

Aristot. Ethic.

The *Philosopher* tells us, that a Wicked man is far more mischievous then any wild Beast; because he has the Advantage of his Reason to help him in his villanous Designs and Contrivances; and truly this is much more true of such seeming *Pious* and *Sober* men, that want common *Justice* and *Charity*, that they are the most dangerous of all men to deal with;

with; their Mistaken Zeal and Discretion edging their Malice, and invenoming the Wounds; and that fair outside gaining them Credit, and giving them Opportunity for any mischief they have a mind to do; and I pray God keep every honest man out of such mens way, however godly or sober they may be.

Charity is of another temper; *thinketh no evil*, and is so far from wronging any one, that it *seeketh not her own, does not behave it self unseemly, suffereth long and is kind.* 1 Cor. 13.4,5.

Self-denial, you know, is the very sum of Christian doctrine; and this is the bottom of Righteous and Charitable acts, when we put our Neighbour in our place, and our selves in his, and so deal with him as we would our selves be dealt with at God's hands. But we know that self-ends have a great sway with many of the other sort, that make the greatest and fairest appearances of a Pious and a strict Life: when those specious pretences have serv'd but as the Sheep-skin to cover the Wolvish designs of Rapine, Oppression, Injustice, Hatred, Malice, Envy, and all Uncharitableness; from which Good Lord deliver us. Matth. 16.24. Matth. 7. 15.

Add to this, that if a man be truly Pious, yet 'tis his Charity must make it out, since God takes the measures of our Piety from our Charity, and makes the estimate of our Duties perform'd to him by those we perform to our Brother; so the beloved Disciple resolves it, *1 Ep. Chap. 4. verse 12. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us; and on the contrary, verse 20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he's a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he has seen, how he can love God whom he hath not seen? And this Commandement, says he, have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother also.*

And therefore it is that Christ in the last Judgment, what is done to the least of his brethren, takes it all as done to himself. Matth. 25.40.

Accordingly the Syriac Interpreter gives this Psalm but its due Title, by calling it *Confessio perfecta ad Deum*, a perfect Regard, or thorough Conversion to God. And this as to the Principle.

2. Next these, Duties of Charity are in their Nature more God-like. God is dreadful in his Holiness, and that legal Precept of Moses, *Be ye holy as I am holy*, may seem more apt to astonish men, then to invite them, to possess them with a reverential Awe of God's Majesty, more then to perswade them to the Imitation of him, this being in some respect an unimitable Attribute. But there's Mercy with God that he may be feared; this Mercy of his being the ground of all religious Worship, and an encouragement to a cheerful Obedience. Exod. 15.11. Lev. 11.44. 1 Pet. 1.15. Psal. 130.4.

And so Christ pitches the business of his Religion upon this Attribute in that Evangelical precept, *Be ye merciful, as the Father is merciful*; to do good to all men, Enemies as well as Friends, as God makes his Sun to rise upon the Evil and on the Good, and sends rain on the Just and on the Unjust, and is kind to the Unthankful. Where, as the Vertue recommended is full of Obligingness, so the great Pattern and Example of it carries infinite obligations along with it. Luke 6.36. Matth. 5.45.

And this is both the perfection of a Christian and of God himself also, as appears by comparing the Two Evangelists: For that which S. Luke says, *Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful*, Ch. 6. 36. St. Matthew delivers thus; *Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect*, Ch. 5. ver. 48. To be merciful then as God is merciful, is to be perfect as he's perfect. Now



Now he that is like God in his *perfection*, that is, in his *Mercy*, is in a Way to be perfectly like him, which is the highest step a Christian soul can aspire to. Nor is the nature of man capable of a higher Advance then to be as God is, and to be made thus, by *Charity*, partaker of the Divine nature. And thus St. *John* speaks of it, as that which makes God to be what he is, constitutes him, in *Esse Dei*; God, says he, *is Love*, and *he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

2 Pet. 1. 4.

1 John 4. 16.

The *Holiness* and *Purity* of God's Essence and Nature is a thing, which dazles and confounds all our apprehensions of him; but his *Goodness* and *Mercy* and *Clemency* is a comfortable subject of Meditation, by which he has made himself familiar even to our Senses. Herein the *Majesty* of Heaven appears *serene*, bright and amiable.

Those *Empyrial* Glories and terrible Adornments of unapproachable light, thick clouds, thunder and lightning, wherewith God cloathed himself in the administrations of the *Law*, were, like Flashes of terrour, but the Affrightments of amazed mortal Understandings. In this sense *Moses* tells them, their *God is a consuming fire.*

But the Streams of *Gospel-light*, the shining Glory about the *Mercy-seat*, and the Emanations of Divine Goodness in the Humanity of his Son, who was *the brightness of his Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, convey a more benign and cherishing light, of which the *Sun* was the fittest Embleme.

Hebr. 1. 3.

WOW *servus,*  
*minister.*

Mal. 4. 2.

John 1. 9.

For as that great Minister of Nature, so his *Hebrew* name speaks him, dispenses Life and Vigour to all the inferiour World; so Christ the *Sun of Righteousness with healing in his Wings*, (as the Heathens made their *Apollo* the God of *Light* and *Physick* too) sheds forth upon all Mankind the kindly rays and healing Vertues and gracious Influences of his Meditation in all Temporal and Spiritual blessings; he being *that Light which in-lightneth every man that comes into the World.*

And we are thus in our several *Spheres* to move in a *Concentricity* with him, doing all manner of good to all manner of Persons; our *Righteousness* being that which irradiates and influences all our other *Graces*, which, though like lesser lights, in the absence of the *Sun*, they may twinkle and glitter in their Stations, and bespangle the Firmament of a Christian conversation, yet without *Charity* cannot of themselves make a day of Glory.

2 Pet. 1. 19.

*Faith* may be the *Day-star*, arising in our hearts, which may usher in the Morn, and proclaim day; but 'tis *Charity* must make it so.

When the *Stars* appear, we call it *Night*, be it never so shiny; but in the presence of the *Sun* all these tapers of themselves go out and disappear, yielding to their Prince alone the glories of his Triumph. And though our other *Graces* may cast a great Luster here in the night of this our Mortality, yet in the day of the Resurrection 'tis *Love* alone, that coeternal and commensurate with God himself, shall fill the Heavens with its Brightness, and make one intire Day of everlasting Glory.

Now as *Righteousness* and *Charity* are Celestial and Godlike qualities, and our *Humility* suitable to Divine Condescensions; so their opposite *Vices* are hellish, and have the nearest Resemblances to the *Devil* in all his dismal features.

The *Devils* (if the Story of the *Incubusses* be true) cannot act *Lust*, or practice *Sensuality* without the help of assumed and borrow'd Bodies. These are the Vices of Men; but *Pride* and *Envy* and *Malice* are con-natural to *Devils*. Their very *Impiety* is nothing but their want of *Charity*.

Their high Thoughts of themselves, and their Reflexions upon their own Excellencies made them forget that Gratitude and Duty they owed to their Maker; and after their own *Apostacy*, they envy and malice not only God himself, but all his Creatures too, as they are his, and possibly so far one another; and hereupon all their Design and Imploy has ever been to mischief God in his Government, and himself being out of the reach of their Spight, they turn'd Tempters to debauch *Man*, the next Creature in dignity to the *Angels*, whose *Obedience* and *Felicity* they with bleer eyes lookt upon as the great Upbraid of their own *Rebellion* and *Miscarriage*.

The *Devil* was the first *Rebel* who first broke Rule and disliked Government, who according to the Policy of *Rebellion*, (when the Sword is once drawn, to sling away the Scabbard) with an irreconcilable animosity ever since can neither endure his *Sovereign*, nor any *Loyal Subject* he has.

In this lies the very Character of *Devil*. And he is that God of this *World*, who *worketh in the children of Disobedience*, in all that are of a stubborn, refractory, unquiet, unreasonable Spirit. And the more any one complies with this ill-natur'd *Genius*, the more *malicious*, and *envious*, and *unjust*, and *proud*, and *false*; in a word, the more *Unrighteous* and *Uncharitable* any man is, the more like the *Devil* he is; and the greater shew he makes of *Piety* and *Sobriety*, the more dangerous this *Devil* still, who notwithstanding his infernal Hew can appear like an *Angel of light*; and then, when he has thus with the *Artificial Beauty* of a pretended *Zeal* varnished over the natural deformities of his innate *Malice*, is apt to do the shrewdest and the most unavoidable *Mischiefs*. 2 Cor. 4. 4.  
Eph. 2. 2.

3. And this is the last thing in this Proposition we are to consider, the *Consequents* and *Effects*, wherein works of *Charity* have infinitely the Advantage of any other good Works; as naturally tending more to the Good of Mankind. And this according to that known Maxim, *Bonum, quod communius, ed melius*: A good thing, the more communicative 'tis, the better. And hence the *Greek* terms a good kind charitable man, *χρηστος*, an *useful* man to the Publick, and Blessing to the Family, to the Neighbourhood, to the Nation, where he lives.

Whereas *Piety* and *Sobriety* are confin'd to a narrow Compass, take a private Walk, and as to the Benefit of them, excepting the good Example, are Vertues of a meer personal concern, for the Closet and the House, to be practis'd much within doors; *Righteousness* and *Charity* keep open House, walk abroad into the Streets and the Fields, spread their Arms wide, like our dying Saviour, to imbrace all Mankind, enlarge the bowels of Compassion to all they have any way to do with, and are as *Catholic*, and of as universal an Extent, as the *Church* it self is.

These are the *bands* and *ligaments* which knit and oblige *Societies* of men with mutual entercourses of Just and kind Respects.

It

It would be an infinite Task to give *Charity* its due Commendation, to reckon up all the deserved Glories of its famed Achievements. Nor shall I now at this time adventure upon such a Harangue. Only in brief;

This is that which has made men famous in their several Generations, consecrated and imbalm'd their Memories to grateful and admiring Posterity, and made their Names look bravely big in Story; founding *States* upon wholsom Laws, settling just Rules and Measures of *Commerce*, subduing and ordering whole *Nations* with the Efforts and powerful Deductions of a well manag'd reason to the discipline of *Righteousness*, and obliging the universality of mankind with the efficacious Instincts and illustrious Instances of a generous active *Charity*.

Plin. in Pref.  
ad Nat. Hist.

*Hæc itur ad Cælos*, says he; This is the milky Way which leads to the palaces of Glory, and the regions of Bliss. *His gradibus Romulus ascendit*, &c. This was it canoniz'd all the Great men of former Ages, who for their publick Benefactions were own'd with the Adorations of the multitude. This was that intitled them Fathers of their Countreys, and dispensing with their Vices and Infirmities, gave them the Reputation of Gods.

On the other hand, Those that made it the sole Advantage of their high place to do unjust things, as they were a while the Terror, so in a short time became the Scorn of the people; were lookt on as Monsters and prodigies of Mankind; *Devils* in humane shape, impower'd only to do mischief; and therefore as their *pride*, and *falsehood*, and *tyranny* was intolerable, so their Ends were lamentable, and their Memories deservedly accursed, whatever their Vertues or other good Parts might be.

And thus it is with all Ranks and Degrees of men proportionably: the *Extortioner*, the *Slanderer*, the *Tale-bearer*, the *Dissembler*, the *Unruly* and *Disobedient*, the *Proud* and *Factionous*, the *Usurer*, the *corrupt Officer*; in a word, the *Unrighteous* and *Uncharitable* are the Men, let them be of what Religion they will, that fill the World with all manner of Mischiefs and Disorders.

And yet, I know not how, some people are of another mind, and think far otherwise; they cry out (and I wish they had not so great occasion) of the *Prophaneness*, the *Atheism*, the *Looseness* and *Intemperance* of the times, as if the Restitution of our Liberties had serv'd only to licence irreligious Misdemeanor. *Pudet hæc opprobria*, &c. and they are ready to charge all our National Disasters and Calamities upon the *Swearers*, and the *Drinkers*, and the *Wantons* score.

I am so far from doing the Office of a *Proctour* for Hell, in pleading excuse for any sin, that I judge it a fit subject to bestow our *Tears* in private, and our *Prayers* in publick upon; that God would move the hearts of Magistrates by their Authority to redress this Grievance, which gives so just offence to the truly Godly, and such advantage to those who perhaps are but *seemingly* so; and to bind up this loose spirit, which has, to the dishonour of our *Religion* and *Government*, walkt up and down in all parts of the Land, to its good Behaviour.

But withal, as these sins are with much Vehemence of Zeal, and justly too, declaim'd against, as scandalous and provoking sins; so those others of *Heresie*, *Schism*, spiritual *Pride*, *Disobedience*, *Slander*, *Envy* and *Malice*, which are now grown no less in their Practice notorious, and are in their very Design and Nature more destructive, and possibly were the occasion of those others; while short sighted men, perceiving so



so much *Knavery* and *Villany* to lie under the cloak of *Religion*, are apt to suspect there is no such thing as Religion at all. *These*, I say, are in the mean time by the same good people not at all taken notice of; but, being covered with the Mantle of a seeming *Piety* and a sober Disguise, pass for the Characters of a *tender Conscience*, and an *Evangelical liberty*. And yet these things do naturally and manifestly tend to the dissolution of all *Government* both *Sacred* and *Secular*, by loosning and (if that will not do) breaking the Bands of publick *Peace* and *Order*.

*Those* former sins may be the *Occasions* indeed of Judgment to a Nation; but *these* others likely are the *Instruments* to inflict it; as God of late years permitted a *Schismatical* party to bear sway amongst us, and to usurp a Power to chastise the vices and debaucheries of the *Loyal* and *Orthodox*, as formerly the *Goths* and *Vandals* were God's scourges to correct the laziness and looseness of the *Christians*.

And I know not whether we have reason to be secure from such apprehensions again. Whilest the Husbandmen slept, 'tis said, 'twas the envious man sow'd *tares* of dissention and disorder in the Field of the Church or State or Nation; be the Field what it will. If the Husbandmen sleep, the Magistrates be remiss, and good Laws not well executed, to be sure the Envious man will watch his opportunities for Mischief.

May all former Practices of this kind for me be fairly buried in oblivion, but if they have the Confidence to come upon the Stage again, I know no reason to think our selves obliged to forget those Mischiefs and Miseries, which formerly did attend them.

Whether those men, which bear ill-will to the *Church*, have any further cast under that pretence, God and themselves know best; but here *Ipse viderint*, Let them look to it will not serve the turn; 'tis *We* all of us are concern'd to look to it. 'Tis the same Method the Old Cause used before, and it would be a strange thing to see the Miracle of our *Restitution* slung up, to have *Oblivion* and *Indemnity* improved into Submission and Compliance, it would be, I say, a strange Revolution, that some people, who few years since would have been glad to have purchas'd their Lives with their Fortunes, should now stand on *Tiptoe* in an expectation, that that *Cause* should still carry the Day.

But there's no honest English-man that would wish to live to see that day.

'Tis confest then, that *Sensuality* is a Bestial Life; but let them take this along with them too, that *Envy* is *Satanical*, Spiritual *Pride Luciferian*, and *Malice Diabolical*.

The *Deboshe's* degrade themselves into *Swine*; but there's another sort that advance themselves to *Devils*; and, I think, there's a great deal of difference betwixt the *Heard of Swine* and the *Legion of Devils*, Mark 5. 31. which entred into them and hurried them, poor *Animals*, down the Precipice; and 'tis an easie choice for any Governour, which he had rather have to deal with, the Hogs or the evil Spirits, *that* being a Creature which will drive, and the design of *these* being only to tear and rend, where they get possession. And yet we know, whose Title 'tis to be *Rex Daemonum*.

May it please a gracious God, who has wrought such Wonders of *Mercy* and *Judgment* in the midst of us, to unite our Hearts in his *Fear*, and to pour forth his Spirit of *Love*, that we may, laying aside all Animosities and unnecessary Quarrels, serve him with one Heart and with one Shoulder, and with one Voice confess his holy Name and his Word; that,

as we have the same native *Countrey*, live or should live under the same *Laws*, and profess the same *Religion*, so we would be like minded one towards another, and unanimously seek those things which tend to publick Peace, and to the mutual Benefit of one another, that we may in all  
 1 Thess. 4. 11. Meekness bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and study to be quiet, minding every one his own business, and working the Works of *Righteousness* and *Charity*.

And then, when we are thus united in the Practice of *these things*, which men of all Perswasions (if they are in earnest) must acknowledge to be the main necessities and Essentials of a Christian profession, all other Disorders will easily be regulated, all Grievances redrest, and all Scandals removed to the honour of the Government, and the Welfare of the People. Then shall we see both *Church* and *State* to flourish even in their outward condition, with all manner of prosperity. For that's the *lust Position* we have to speak to, and I shall be brief; and 'tis this,

III. That *Honesty and just Dealing is the best Security for our very temporal Concerns. He that does these things, shall never be moved: No, not in this World.*

1 Tim. 4. 8. This is that *Godliness*, which has the Promise of this Life and that which is to come.

The steady *honest* man is *steady*, like a *Die*; throw him which way you will, he lights upon a square.

Nor does the expectation of a blessed *Futurity* only bear him up, but he finds *present* recompence and glorious Earnests of his eternal Hopes aforehand even in his temporal Injoyments, and in this very Life reaps a  
 Mark 10. 30. *Hundredfold*. And were there nothing else, the very Conscience of doing well is it self a brave reward.

Further, the *Righteous* man, that deals justly and kindly with his Neighbour, has a good Assurance, that he himself shall be so dealt with,  
 Luke 6. 38. and that the Measure he makes will with blessed Advantage be return'd into his own bosome.

The *sincere* honest man, that walks perfectly, gains a Respect and Reputation due to his Integrity; whilst the *Dissembler* through all his cobweb-Artifices is discover'd and publickly spit at.

He that speaks *Truth*, needs never be ashamed; but he that telleth  
 Psal. 101. 7. *Lies*, shall not abide in the presence of great men, but will be out of Countenance and in disgrace, and like *Ejop's* boy, not be believed even when he tells Truth.

He that is *tender* of anothers Credit and Fame, does by this means secure his own; but the *bold* forward Speaker, that gives Characters of men at all adventures, meets at last with those, that are as bold as he, and the *Confidence* of the man makes any story of him, go down with the easier belief.

Thus the *Backbiter* has others, that do the same office for him; as in the *Microscope* they have observ'd, those *Vermin*, which infest us, have other little *Insects*, that stick close to them, and prey upon them in the like manner as they do upon us.

Prov. 19. 17. He that's *liberal* to the Poor, lends to the Lord, and by that means has the greatest Security and the best Consideration in the World for his money: whereas the Covetous *Usurer* likely drudges for the prodigal Spendthrift, and the *Hoarder* inherits the curses of the People.

Prov. 11. 26. The *Modest* man makes his Merit not only to appear, but to be the greater; when the confident *Boaster* of his own deserts, by the importune

portune Commendations of himself, looses his due Praise.

The Magistrate, that's *just* and impartial in the discharge of his Trust, consults his own Interest no less than the publick Weal, in a fair Establishment of his Fortunes and Posterity; whilst he that builds himself upon *Extortion*, when *Bribes* and unjust Practices have swoln into a Greatness, fores high to court ruin, and falls unpitied; and like the boys *Paper-kites*, is long a raising, but quickly by slackning the Line comes down again.

Let foolish and wicked *Greatness* applaud it self, as it please, in the fond *Maxims* of *Atheistical Policy*, and with *Acco* at her glass admire her own Excellencies: When all's done, 'tis the *Honest* man, that's the only *Wise* and the *Great* man; who lives above the Smiles and Frowns of Princes; who secures his Fortunes within himself; who acts from the spring of a good Conscience within, and is unconcern'd in the success of affairs without.

One who is *Capapé* mailed with his Integrity, that neither *Envy* nor *Malice* can find a way to hurt him.

*Slunder* doth but break her venom'd teeth in him, and *Violence* loose her blow.

He stands all shocks unmov'd, and like a *Rock* dashes the Waves, which dash him, back again into foam and froth.

He *sees* no *Ill Tidings*, for his *Heart* is *fixed*; and amidst all changes he changes not, but like his God, is the *same Yesterday and To day*. Psal. 112.7.  
Hebr. 13.8.

*Honour* makes not him think the better of himself; nor the want of it the worse: for his *Maily* worth, like ingots of Gold, owes not it self to the publick *Stamp*, but to its own intrinsic *Value*.

What this or t'other State designs, he troubles not himself; nor do the Disorders of the *greater World* any way discompose his Government at home; and that *Universal Empire*, which he manages within his own breast, in the midst of National ruins and disasters, remains unshaken.

Nor will the last *Conflagration* it self surprize him, who being wrapt up in brave Resolutions and honest Actions, will abide those searching Flames, which guilty drossy spirits shrink and shrivel at the very apprehension of.

Every little noise startles and gives alarm to the man who has thriven by *iniquity*.

All he *has*, is a dear purchase, it cost him his very Soul, nor is he to *keep* it long, and which is the misery of it too, he is not suffer'd to *enjoy* it neither, while he has it.

Nor is it thus with particular *Persons* only, but in *Bodies* and *Societies* of men.

*Injustice* has been the Ruin of *States*; nor has the *Churches* Sanctity been able to preserve her; when she hath swerv'd from the Rules of *Righteousness*.

When *Profits* have been more regarded then *Duties*, and more Zeal shewn for the *Rights* of the Church, then for the good of *Souls*.

When those temporal Dignations and *Priviledges* and the *Indulgences* of Princes, whom God makes *nursing Fathers* to his Church, which were intended for the Incouragements of *Industry*, the Rewards of *Merit*, the Retirements of an honourable Emerit *Old age*, the supports and Ornaments of a learned *Piety*, and the Instruments of an exemplary *Charity*, have been through the corruptions of *Church-men* themselves imbezill'd, and made the Acquists of *Ambition*, the Characters and distinctions



ons of *Parties*, the materials of *Luxury*, and the refuges of *Sloth*; in fine, the Advantages of secular *Greatness* and of a carnal *Interest*; it has been just with God in such cases, (with God I say, but let men take heed how they meddle with Sacred things; I say it has been just with God in such Cases) to suffer them to be made a Prey to Lay-mens sacrilege.

And when the *Reverence* of a Church is once gone, 'tis easie to Prophe-  
sie, that the *Revenue* is not likely to stay long behind.

Further, when God has a Controversie against a People, he likely first begins *ab ipso Lare*, at his own House the Church.

*Religion* is affronted first, the *Church* disgrac'd and unhallow'd, and then the People are growing destruction-ripe.

No surer sign then this of an approaching Ruin to a State; when Religion is brought into a disrepute, and contempt thrown upon Sacred things and Persons.

I wish this may never be our Case, and I heartily Pray to God, that he will settle both *Church* and *State* upon the sure and lasting Foundations of *Righteousness*, and so knit our Hearts in Love to one another, that we may all of us in our several Stations industriously apply our selves to those things, which *belong to our Peace* now in this our day; that both the *Authority* of Superiors, and the *Obedience* of Inferiors, and the mutual *Regards* of all Persons whatsoever, may be so squar'd and fitted to *Righteous* Rules and to the exact Measures of *Charity*, that we of these *Nations*, may by divine Mercy be so supported, that for the future we may *never more be moved!* Amen.

Luke 19. 42.

*Of the Kingdom of God and the Obligations  
thence to Repentance.*

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall*, before the King,  
*March 2. 167<sup>8</sup>/<sub>9</sub>.*

S. Mark I. xv.

*—The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is  
at hand; repent ye and believe the Gospel.*



THESE Words were the first *Sermon* that was ever preached in the *Christian Church*, by our Blessed Lord the Founder of it, as S. Mark here tells us; and afterward in a shorter Form by his *Apostles* according to his own order and appointment, as it had been by the *Baptist* his Forerunner before.

It consists and is made up, as all Discourses of this kind, which tend to edification, should do; of a *Doctrinal* and an *Applicatory* part.

The *Doctrine* tells us of the *Kingdom of Gods* near Approach; the *Application* shews us, what serious Use we are to make of it, to prepare our selves for its coming by *Repenting and Believing*.

The *Kingdom of God* has three usual Acceptions in Scripture, as it is commonly explained in the *second Petition* of the *Lord's Prayer*; the Kingdom of his *Grace*, the Kingdom of his *Power*, and the Kingdom of his *Glory*.

1. It is taken for the *Evangelical State*; for that *Doctrine*, which *Christ* the Son of God in person taught and delivered in the *Gospel*, for the profession and power of Christian Religion. *Luke 16. 16. The Law and the Prophets were until John; since that time the Kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.* That is; Now there is an end put to the *Legal Administration*, and the *Gospel* is proclaimed and generally intertain'd in the World.

But I need go no further then the *verse* immediately before the Text: *Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand.* And this is termed the Kingdom of *Grace*.

And in this sense the time was perfectly fulfilled; that time, which the *Prophets* all along had foretold for the coming of the *Messias*, whom God sent into the World (as the *Apostle* expresses it) *when the fulness of Gal. 4. 4. the time was come.*

2. It

2. It denotes sometimes divine Vengeance, inflicting National Judgments, and punishing his refractory Enemies; particularly, in the New Testament stile, it doth eminently signifie the *παρωλεσις*, the utter extirpation of the *Jewish* Commonwealth, the subversion of their Polity, and the desolation of the City and Temple of *Jerusalem* by the *Romans* under *Titus*.

And then was the *time* and period of the people of the *Jews* fulfilled; and this is the Kingdom of his *Power*.

Matth. 3. 10. And this certainly was that the *Baptist* meant in his larger discourse to the people, when he tells them, *The ax is now laid to the root of the tree*; foretelling the final excision of that Nation, upon their refusal of *Christ* and their obstinate impenitence.

Now this execution of divine Vengeance upon that People is also in other places called *Christ's* dreadful *appearance* and *coming* to be avenged upon his Crucifiers.

3. In the third place, by the *Kingdom of Heaven* is most frequently understood the future state of the *Church Triumphant*, in the next Life and the World to come.

And this is so obvious a meaning of the words every where throughout Scripture, that I shall not need to bring any place but that alone, where our Saviour gives us an account of that time, when the good shall be sent away into everlasting Bliss with a *Come ye blessed and inherit the Kingdom prepared for you*.

Rev. 10. 6. And this is the Kingdom of *Glory*: and then will *Time* it self have its full Completion; for *Time* then shall be no longer, but be swallowed up into Eternity.

There are besides, *two* more peculiar notions of the *Kingdom of God*.

1. The *general Judgment* at the end of the World. Thus *St. Peter*; *The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, &c.* which is much what the same that is said here; *The Kingdom of God is at hand; therefore repent*.

And accordingly *St. Chrysostom* observes upon *Matth. 24.* where *Christ* foretells the ruin and overthrow of the City, that he expresses himself in such terms, as have *Allusion* to and Compliance with the great and terrible day of the universal Judgment at the end of the World.

Matth. 3. 12. And so the *Baptist* too makes it out, saying, that *his Fann is in his hand, and he shall thoroughly purge his Floor*, which is not to be done till after the Harvest, when the *wheat* and *chaff* shall be separated, and the chaff then burnt with unquenchable fire.

2. In a personal Concern, so as to take in the *particular Doom* of every man, when he is cut off by death: for then *every tree, that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire*, as the *Baptist* saith; and then time will be fulfilled too, when every man's appointed time shall come.

Now though all these *five* Considerations are none of them improper to the purposes of the *Text*; as being every one singly a very fit medium, whereby to inforce the Duty of *Repentance*; yet I shall at this time, waving the rest, insist only upon the *two* first Importances, as those which are mainly and peculiarly intended.

Then



Then to *Repent* (for we are now upon the *Explication* of the terms; to *repent*, I say) *μετάνοιαν*, according to the Grammatical notion of the word is to *change the mind*, or to think over again; to take up other Principles and Resolutions, then by what we have hitherto acted: and this *change of Mind* we might deduce thorough all the operations of man's mind, by simple *Consideration*, by serious *Debate*, by a steady *Resolution* of Judgment, and by a hearty *Engagement* of the Will and of the whole Man into the Service.

And to *believe the Gospel* is to entertain the *Truths* of Christian Religion with an humble *Faith*, and to imbrace the *Duties* of it with a ready *Obedience*.

In short, to *repent* and to *believe* is, as it is set forth *Luke 15.* by comparing the last verse with the last save one, to be perswaded of the Truth of a thing, and to act according to that Perswasion; such a Perswasion or Conviction being apt to beget Repentance.

But of the Duty of *repenting* and *believing* I shall not now treat; only propose to my self these two things.

1. First to prove, that the *Kingdom of God* in these two senses, I have pitcht upon, *is at hand*, *ἵνα ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἥτις ἐγγύς ἐστιν* is drawn near, or, as Christ elsewhere expresses it, *ἐγγύς ἐστιν ἡμῶν* is come upon us; and then

Matth. 12. 28

2. Next to make good the Connexion of the terms, the *Kingdom of God* and *Repentance*, or the Consequence of the Argument, how the necessity of *Repentance* is inferred from the near approach of *God's Kingdom*, which I shall clear by some practical *Corollaries* upon each head.

I. First then, that the *Kingdom of God*, that is, the Kingdom of his *Grace*, hath been *at hand*; whereby the *Gospel* was published, and a *Church* gathered and established by the Spirit of *Christ*; wherein all saving Truths are preserv'd and delivered to us, is a thing so palpable even in the Records of *Heathen-story*, that amongst *Christians*, which own this Book of the *two Testaments*, it were but loss of time to go about to prove it.

For the *Jews*, who were at that time God's peculiar People, and the alone true Church under the *Legal Oeconomy*: *Christ* himself in person came to them, and dwelt amongst them, doing and speaking things so, as never man did or spoke; to the Conviction of all but such, as seeing would not see, and perceiving would not understand.

John 11. 45.

John 7. 46.

Luke 8. 10.

And for the rest of the World (that was all *Heathen*) not to mention *Balaam's* star, which guided the Wisemen of the East to our infant Saviour; or the *Sibylline* Verses, or any other Advantages of knowledge, the learned amongst them might meet with; the voice of the *Apostles* went to the ends of the Earth, and filled all parts of the World with the glad tidings of salvation.

Numb. 24. 17.

Matth. 2. 9.

Psal. 19. 3, 4.

To instance in our selves; we of these *British Islands*, who are thrust into such a by-Corner of the World, that that age, wherein *Christ* lived, lookt upon us as out of the World.

*Et penitus toto divisos Orbe Britannos.*

Hor. Virg.

If some *Church-Historians* may be credited, we had the *Gospel* preached here, before *Rome* it self was an Episcopal See; and *Christ's* Banners were displaid here not many years after the *Roman* Eagles; that we need not be beholden to Pope *Gregory* for our Christianity, or owe our Religion

Religion to proud *Austin* the Monk his Missionary.

And has not this Countrey, for these many years, though lying so far out of the *Tropick*, yet lain as it were under the very Track and Road of the *Sun of Righteousness*?

To come to later times; this *English-Church* was one of the first, that by a regular procedure of *Reformation* disown'd the Corruptions and Abuses and Incroachments of the *Romish Church*, and being thrust out went off from her Communion: and God of his great Mercy forbid that our sins should ever bring us back again, or betray us so far, as to make it our *Punishment*, or, which is much worse, our *choice*, and consequently our great *sin*, to return to that *Egyptian* bondage, the *Papish Tyranny*. God, I say, of his great Mercy forbid it, and check the Insolence of their hopes that design it, and forgive us our great Provocations, which may make us justly fear that or something like it!

What a Summers day of *Gospel-shine* have we had here amongst us? with what plentiful Provision of Spiritual means have we been constantly furnished? and yet we, as if too much Scripture-light had blinded us, how barren and non-proficient have we been under all the saving means of Grace? what neglect have we shewn of so great Salvation? what contempts and indignities have we offered, rather have we not offered, to the Word of God and to every thing that wears his sacred Character? Nay, to those very things, which, next to God's Almighty Providence, are the only *Ramparts* against Popery, our *Liturgy* and our *Episcopacy*?

Now as our Saviour, when he found his Miracles cavilled, fetcht an Argument even from their opposition, that *the Kingdom of Heaven was come upon them*; so from these peevish humors of some People, from this Contempt, which commonly proceeds from a familiarity, from this surfeit upon God's word, we may conclude that we have hitherto been far from a famine of the Word; that we have had, as we say, *Gods plenty*, and more then we care for, so much as to putrifie and breed Worms, like the over-gathered *Manna*; and are furcharged with it as the *Israelites* with *Quails* in the Wilderness.

Matth. 12. 28.

Exod. 16. 20.

Numb. 11. 20.

And this shews, what we were to prove, that the *Gospel of the Kingdom* has been sufficiently manifested among us.

The Kingdom of *Grace* then is near at hand; but we, like the *Jews*, are but ill Subjects for it to work upon.

It is high time then for us to *repent*; which is the Inference, the next thing to be clear'd: which we shall do in these *four* Positions.

I. That the *Obligations of Grace* are *higher and stricter*, then those of *Nature* are.

II. That *Evangelical terms* are more obliging then the *Legal* were.

III. That the greater *Light* any *People* or *Person* hath, the more *Means* are afforded to us, the greater *Practise* is lookt for at our hands.

IV. That the *Examples* of those, that have gone before us in our *Christian Profession*, are considerable *Advantages* to us; and will, if not followed, prove as great *Aggravations* of our miscarriage.

The first Consideration opposeth us to *Heathens*; the second to *Jews*; the third to all other *Christians* of whatever denominations; the fourth to *Primitive Christians*: and on all hands they make out our *Advantages* above all other *Men*, above all other *Christians*, whether modern

or

or ancient; which, if not improved, will prove as great Disadvantages.

I. *The Obligations of Grace are much higher and stricter, than those of Nature*; and yet those were sufficient to render men inexcusable.

That glimmering taper of natural Reason, if it were not sufficient to instruct them in their *Duty* they owed to God, nor d.d afford them light enough to find their way to *Heaven*; yet served at least to convince them of their *sins*, and of divine Justice in sending them to *Hell*.

Now if they that lived without a Law, perished without the Law, and the Law written in their Hearts was enough to condemn them; much more shall we be without excuse, if we sin against so much light, as the Gospel hath brought us. Rom. 2. 12.

If they stumbled, that were to grope their way in the dark, it was no great wonder; but what a reproach will it be to us, if we fall and miscarry at Noon-day? there will be no pity due to us.

Now that *Gospel-day* has dissipated all that fog and clear'd the darkness, which lay upon the *Heathen World*, and the whole Earth is become a *Gospel-land*; it is high time for us to cast away the deeds of darkness, and to put on the Armour of Light. Rom. 13. 12.

Indeed before *Gospel-times*, God ~~imagine~~ overlookt, and took no notice of several miscarriages and ill customs, which had got countenance and footing in the World through *Heathen-ignorance*: but now, at the break of *Gospel-day*, those evil spirits, that had haunted the World before, and played such pranks even amongst the most civil and sober Nations, disappeared; and the *Oracle* it self was silenced with this dying groan, *Μέγας Πάν τῶν χρόνων, great Pan is dead*, as *Plutarch* informs us. Acts 14. 16.

And yet in their darkest times there were not wanting eminent Examples of all kind of *Moral Vertue*, which may challenge and shame some of the best of *Christians*, as *Christians* go now adays.

How, to pass their other *Seets* of *Philosophy* (which, God knows was all the *Divinity* they had; how) would the *Stoick* brow and gravity, that tied themselves up to such severe Rules of Life, put licentious shattered *Christians* out of Countenance?

*Epicurus* himself, the worst of all their Philosophers, as they commonly esteemed him; yet (if some Learned men give a right account of him) design'd only ingenuous and vertuous *Pleasures* of the Mind, and would have been ashamed of our sensual Treatments and carnal Debaucheries.

I am not, when I read any of their *Works* or their *Lives*, so far of *Erasmus* his mind, as to be tempted to say, *Sancte Socrates ora pro nobis*; but am almost of his Opinion, that some of those *Heathens* deserved a place in the *Calendar* of *Saints* as well as some of the *Popes* making.

Who can but admire their elevated Reasons and advanced Understandings, when he hears them talk so divinely of *God's Nature* and his Attributes, and of the Powers and Faculties of the *Soul*? and blush at the gray-headed Ignorance of many old professing *Christians*, who have sate under so many hundreds of *Sermons*, have had leasure and opportunity enough to acquaint themselves with *God* and their own *Souls* out of *God's own Book*, and yet are able to say little or nothing of the one or the other? when some of them by meer natural Inquiries could gather more useful knowledge out of the eighth *Psalms*, the *Heavens*, the *Moon*,



and the *Stars*, and learnt more from the *beasts of the Field*, and *fishes of the Sea*, from those dumb teachers, then many an ignorant *Christian* from the *Prophets* and *Apostles*.

But then, if we look further upon their *Practice*; here is their greater glory and our greater shame.

How should we blush at the sight of those *Worthies*, the mirrors of *Moral* perfection, when we reflect upon our own *Immoralities*?

Certainly, if we deny them a place in *Heaven*, as some of the *Fathers* are very severe to them; yet we must acknowledge, when we look upon the Herd of *Christianity*, they deserve a more tolerable place in *Hell*, then many of those that retain to *Christ* do.

If just *Aristides* be sentenced to *Hell*, whither must a corrupt *Christian*-Magistrate look to be sent? there must a new *Hell* be made for him, or at least the old one heated seven times over.

If chaste *Lucretia* is to be damned, whose greatest fault was, that she could not out-live the Reputation of her Vertue, and scorn'd to wear a stained Honour; what will become of wanton loose *Christians*?

But alas! if we should go to compare *Lives* with those ancient honest *Heathens*; such is the generality of the *Christian* World, an impartial stander by would judge them to be the *Christians*, and us the *Heathens*.

Let us draw the Parallel lower with *Turks* and *Infidels* of our own standing.

How will a sober temperate *Mahumetan* rise up in Judgment against a prophane debosht *Christian*? May not an honest fair-dealing *Bannian*, when he comes to give up his Accounts at last, more fairly expect to be saved, then a cheating and lying *Christian*? Has not a zealous devout *Pagan* more reason to hope for Heaven, then a careless indifferent *Christian*? since had he had the happiness or good luck to have light upon the true God, it is not unlikely he would have paid the same Devotion to him, as he has unfortunately placed upon his *Pagod*?

What a shame would it be then, that *Christians* should lead *Heathen* lives, and that our Practices should be generally so unsuitable to our Principles? that though the Kingdom of Heaven be in us, *Luke* 17. 11. yet we set our Heart altogether upon Earth and Flesh, and being under the Power of Grace, we let sin reign in our mortal Body? and that the greater *Obligations* we have upon us for *Repentance*, the less sensible we are of them, and the more resolved we are not to repent?

## II. *Evangelical terms are more obliging then the Legal were.*

'Tis true; the *Law* and *Gospel* are the same in substantials of Doctrine, both grounded upon *Christ*; and differed only in *Oeconomy* and Form of Administration.

The *Prophets* and Saints of the Old Testament believed in *Christum venturum*, in the *Messias* that was to come. We believe *Christum venisse*, that *Christ* is come.

Their Faith lookt forward in prospect upon a thing to be done; ours looks backward with a retrospect upon the same thing done.

Their faith was bottom'd upon God's Promises; ours not only upon the Promises in the *Old Testament*, but upon the Performances also in the *New*.

Their

Their belief was groundd upon *Prophecy*; ours upon the Truth of *History* too.

Wherefore we have more perfect and clearer Discoveries, fuller and plainer Declarations of God's Will concerning our Salvation; whereas they had the Heavenly *Mysteries* represented to them only in *Types* and *Figures*.

The *Hieroglyphicks* of the *Old Testament* were transcrib'd into legible Characters in the *New*.

They saw but as it were *in a glass*, through a glass, in a Perspective; we in a manner see face to face, at least the Apostles did; and therefore *Christ* tells them, that *Kings* and *Prophets* desired to see what they saw, and did not see. 1 Cor. 13. 12. Luke 10. 24.

Now when *Christ*, who was the Truth, was come, all those shadows vanished, and the whole *Ceremonial Law* was abolished, and their Sacrifices, wherein lay the main of divine Worship, by his one perfect oblation (as himself cry'd out upon the Cross) had their full end and consummation. John 14. 6. John 19. 30.

And yet though those *Typical* and *Ritual* Services are now past and over, never to be recalled into use again; yet they are unreasonably fond, that fancy themselves released from all obligations to the *Moral Law*, because they are under Grace; and that now, since *Christ* hath suffered for us, we are therefore dismissed with our sins, like the scape-Goats, to go whither we will, and walk as we list. Lev. 16. 10.

No; that was not the purpose of *Christ's* coming; he himself tells us as much: *Think not* (says he) *that I came to destroy the Law*; and he tells us over again, *I came not to destroy the Law*, but *πληρῶσαι τὸν νόμον*, not only to fulfill the *Law* in his own Person by his active and passive obedience; but to fill it full too and to make it up, by his *Authority* improving the Weight of its Precepts, and by his *Expositions* inancing the *Christian* obligations above the *Judaical* account. Matth. 5. 17.

He freed us indeed from the yoke and bondage of *Ceremonies*, but did not discharge us from *moral Duties*.

Their *legal Purities*, which they were obliged to, were but *Emblems* of that internal Purity of Mind, of that *Innocence* and *Sincerity*, that *Christ's* Law obliges us to; that we should with the same diligence keep the inside clean, as they did the outside.

As they sacrificed *Bulls* and *Goats*, so we are to slay our brutish *Affections*, to mortifie the flesh, to kill our fatling *Lusts*, to pay our *Vows*, and offer the *Sacrifices* of Thanksgiving and Righteousness: nay, as *S. Paul* exhorts the *Romans*, to present our Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, as our reasonable, our rational service. Rom. 12. 1.

And yet 'tis strange, that the *Jews* (some of them) in the shadow saw more and believed better, then many *Christians* do in the Light; and that several of them under the burthen of *Ceremonies*, that troublesome and expensive way of Worship, which we, that in Religion, (what e're we do in other things) study ease and thrift, should hardly like, made greater Progress in *practical Piety*, then we do with all the Advantages of our *Christianity*; as if they had had the quickning Spirit, and had left us only the dead Letter.

I may drive it further, and say, that as the *Jewish* Religion was a Type of the *Christian*; so their very carriage towards *Christ*, when he came amongst them, was but a Type of our Behaviour.

The most of us, what do we do but put a Purple-mock-Robe upon him, and bow the knee and salute him with a scoff, *Hail King!* when we seemingly honour him with an outward Profession, and yet in our lives (which shew our pretences are not in earnest) dishonour and deny him?

What do we do but buffet him with our fists of Iniquity, and beslaver him with our filthy Communication?

In fine, what do we with our great Provocations and foul Miscarriages, but reproach the *King of Glory*, and crucifie the *Lord of Life* over again?

Matth. 5.20.

Now whereas our Saviour tells us, that *except our Righteousness exceed theirs*, the best of them (for such were the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* reputed to be, as people of the strictest Sects among them) *we shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; that is, we shall not be fit to take upon us *Christian* profession, or to be Members of his *Church*; we so demean our selves, as if we would exceed the very worst of them in wickedness.

Gal. 3.6.

Now though we do not expect to be justified by *Works*, by a legal Righteousness, as they it appears some of them did, but by *Faith* in Christ and his Merits; yet that must be such a Faith as *works* and acts or is acted by *Love*, and is accompanied with Repentance and amendment of Life.

Wherefore our *Faith* will do us no good, nay *Christ* himself and the *Gospel of the Kingdom* it self stand us in no stead, but to aggravate our sins and condemnation, unless we repent: For from this strictness of Evangelical Obligations it was, that Repentance was to prepare the Lord's way.

The Gospel-Precepts are of that purity and virtue, that they must not be entertain'd but in Hearts cleansed and renewed by Repentance.

Matth. 9.17.

'Tis our Saviour's similitude he uses, that this *new wine* must be put into *new bottles*. Gospel-Profession without inward Purity is like the new wine in old bottles, which breaks the bottles and spills it self.

III. *The greater Light and Means of Grace, that are afforded to any people or persons, require the greater Practice.*

We must do, as we are done by *here* in the Dispensations of *Grace*, and as we would be done by *hereafter* in the Retributions of *Glory*.

Luke 6.38.

In the same measure God metes to us, we must mete to him again, heaped up and running over. Where God sows much he expects to reap much.

Great Advantages and plentiful means of *Grace* prove great Aggravations of sin to a People. God threatens in this case, *Matth. 21.43.* to take his Kingdom from us, and give it to a Nation that shall bring forth the fruits thereof; and surely we then of these Nations are concern'd in a special manner to repent, having had the word of Life in such plentiful manner dealt to us.

It is true; this is a very *knowing Age* wherein we live; and yet never in any Century of the Church (I fear) less Piety, more Prophaneness, and in the midst of so much pretending knowledge more affected Ignorance. We have a great deal of Light, but no heat with it.



A many *new lights* risen up of late years, like so many *Ignes fatui*, only *Meteors* and unctuous Exhalations, set on fire to misguide the Followers and lead them in a round.

I will not with the *Romans* say, that *Ignorance is the mother of Devotion*; but it hath by some been unhappily observed, that the darkest and most ignorant Ages of the Church were peradventure the most pious and devout.

We now take the business of *Religion* to be only a *tittle tattle*; as if it were only to tip the Tongue, and not to sink into the Heart; and make that frivolous use of Scripture it self only to be a Help of *Discourse*, not a Rule of *Life*.

Truth is; the Religion of these later times has got the Rickets; a great over-grown head, full of *Knowledge*; but lame and dwindled in its feet, deficient and quite lost in *Practice*.

There are enough can talk of Religion; but where shall we meet with one that walks according to it? *Alas!* what Advantage will it be to us that ours is the *Reformed Religion*, if our lives still, if we our selves for all that be unreformed?

To what purpose is it, that the *Tenets* and *Rules* of our Church be exactly conformed to the Word of God, if we our selves do not conform to it in our Conversation?

It will be a sad thing to consider, if we of the *English Church*, as we do excell other *Nations* and *Christian Churches* in purity of *Worship* and soundness of *Doctrine*, should let them as far surpass us in goodness of *Life* and *Practice*.

Our Saviour denounces *Wo* to *Bethsaida* and *Chorazin*, where he had perform'd many of his divine Miracles, and uttered many of his saving Discourses; and prefers *Tyre* and *Sidon*, Heathen Cities, nay, *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, places of notorious Impiety and exemplary Vengeance, before them as to their future Condition, it shall be more tolerable for them then for you in the day of Judgment; and so of *Capernaum*, he says, *thou hast been exalted up to Heaven; thou shalt be brought down to Hell*: that is, The higher any place or person is raised in gifts and means of Grace and Church-Priviledges, the lower shall its state be hereafter, if they have not lived accordingly.

Mat. 11. 21, 22.

Marth. 10. 15.

Marth. 11. 23.

I know it is a general mistake of most people, that to be of this or that *Sect*, to take up this or t'other *Opinion*, to serve God in such or such a *Form*, is the readiest and only way to Heaven.

They are quite out of the way; for it is not any the purest *Form* will of it self save any one, unless there be the *Power of Godliness* going along with it.

*Christians*, I mean such as make an external Profession of Christianity, will go to Hell, thousands of them, as well as *Turks*, *Heathens*, and *Jews*, and deeper too: and those of the *Reformed Church* alike as those of the *Papish*, and deeper still; if they have nothing but their *Form* to distinguish them.

For it is not a bare outward *Profession*, nor a *Form* of worshipping God, be it what it will, will bring any one to Heaven, or keep him out of Hell, without *Faith* and *Repentance*, which are the Conditions of the Gospel and the way to the Kingdom.

IV. *The Examples of those, that have gone before us in our Christian Profession, are great Advantages; and will, if not followed, be great Aggravations.*

The *Precept*, by pressing the Duty, may convince us of the *Necessity* of it; but *Example* gives us *Incouragement*, by making out its *Possibility*; since what has been done by man may be done by man again by the help and cooperation of the same Almighty Spirit.

But if we neglect to follow on in those glorious Tracks, which those *Illustrious Worthies* of our Religion, the blessed *Saints* and *Martyrs* and *Confessours* have left us; we must know that these lights are *burning* as well as *shining*, and will improve our Torment, if they do not help our Amendment.

To name but One, a late one and a great one, one *instar omnium*, such a *Saint* of the first Magnitude, as the Church of *Rome*, since it has presumed to call it self *Catholick*, (which was not till the time of General *Phocas*, the *Oliver* of *Greece*) has not one to compare with him, in all his Characters and Circumstances; one whom God made so conformable to his own Son in his Sufferings; Our late Gracious *Sovereign* and Royal *Martyr*; who laid down his Crown and his Life in the defence of the *Protestant Religion* and the *English Laws*.

What can we think of our selves, any of us, if we should desert those good Principles, upon which he suffered; but that we shall draw down upon our heads the Guilt of that Sacred blood, which hath not yet, as to divine Justice, been so fully expiated, but that we may in all likelihood expect further National Judgments to befall us on that very score?

Well! let us think of our Fathers, of those of former times, as meanly as we will, and censure their Lives as foolish, whose Deaths were glorious; if we do not fail by their *Rumb*, and steer by their *Compass*; their Examples, which they have left behind them for our Imitation, will stand as shrewd Evidences upon record against us; that it was our *wickedness*, and not our *weakness*, that we lived no better, and will for ever upbraid us with the guilt of our eternal Miscarriage.

We might have been Happy as they are, had we done as they did; and we might have done as they did, if we would; for we had the same Advantages and Helps, and more and greater Incouragements.

We have the same *Word* preached to us, the same *Spirit* assisting us, the same holy *Ordinances* for the building of us up, if we had but the same Hearts to make use of them. Nay; and this we have, which they had not, and for which we cannot requite them, their good *Example*; they could not have ours.

Thus, if we will, we may scale Heaven upon their shoulders. This Advantage we have, that are born in the ends of the World; that so many having gone before us, have beaten the road, and made our way to Heaven experimentally plain and easie to find.

But then we must follow, as we can: though not *passibus æquis*; though we cannot fetch such large strides as they did, we may overtake them at their Journeys end, if we hold on our way. We must so imitate them, as *St. Paul* bids us, as they imitated *Christ*, that Example of all Examples: His life being the *Original* piece, and theirs but *Copies*.

I am not for a crowded Catalogue of *Saints*, a *Popish Calendar*; much less do I approve their lying *Legends*: but I do judge, that, as in the general, reading of such Books, as treat of the *Lives* of considerable Persons, is a sure way to gather *Prudence* and make one a *Wise* man; so particularly converting with the *Lives* and *Histories* of *Holy* men, is a very good expedient for *Piety* and *Devotion*, to make one a *Good* man; what we see done by another before our eyes, bringing a greater influence of *Conviction* upon our *Judgment*, that we may do so too, and drawing the *Affections* after it to a kindly *Trial* of *Imitation*; which two things from bare unexemplified *Precepts* is not to be hoped for.

And surely we that live now in the dregs of time, that are at the bottom and sediment of the *World*, and consequently are more corrupt than any time before us, need all the helps that may be to make us good, and to bring us to *Repentance*; especially considering, how near the *Kingdom of God* may be also to us even in that severe sense of God's Judgment and *Visitations*, which is our *second* Stage.

And this is the *Kingdom* of his *Power*, whereby he punishes, and at last destroys wicked Nations for their sins, by laying the *ax* of his Judgments at the root of their tree, and hews them down from ever being a People more.

II. Now to prove that this *Kingdom* was then near at hand to the *Jews*, and has been and is now near at hand to *Us*; there will need nothing, but a bare telling the Story. He must be a great stranger in one and the other *Israel* that will not readily entertain it.

In what posture the *Jewish* state was at this time, I cannot better express then by saying it was much like *ours* now.

Various *Sects* in Religion, made up of a great deal of Zeal and Clamour, mixt with as much Ignorance; spacious pretences of extraordinary Sanctity, but rapine and uncleanness within.

A strange People, you may judge by this, that *Harlots* and *Publicans* were in greater likelihood of being converted and saved, than those who made the fairest shew, and had the greatest Pretences to *Piety* among them. Matth. 21. 31.

Great *Profaneness* on one hand, and as great *Hypocrisie* on the other; and this, it seems, not so reconcilable to Gospel-terms as that was.

Several *Factions* in Church and State; all, out of spite to one another, tearing and rending the Publick, and making their own Advantages from publick miseries; so *Josephus* tells us.

They had been exercised formerly with several severe Judgments from time to time. They were hardened under all. They kill'd and ston'd the *Prophets* that called upon them for Amendment. God sends at last his *Son*; they despitefully use him, they quarrel his Doctrine, deny his Miracles, condemn his Person, persecute him with false accusations, and at last put to Death the Lord of Life.

He, as *Jonas* (who was his type) gave *Niniveh* forty days warning, gave the *Jews* so many years time for *Repentance*, telling them the *Kingdom of Heaven* in their destruction was near at hand, for which they were to be all that time Probationers.

*Niniveh* repented indeed in sackcloth; but *Jerusalem* did not know her day: for forty years after our Saviour's passion, they were hewn down with this *axe*, which was laid at the root of their tree, from ever being a Nation more; God coming upon them for their horrible Impieties with such a dreadful Vengeance, as he never shew'd upon any People; when their Matth. 12. 41.



291.48.2.

their *City and Temple*, the Glory and Joy of the whole Earth, was sackt and burnt and razed by the *Roman Army*; and they themselves, like withered branches, thrown out of the Vineyard, and scattered into all Countries.

Let us cast an eye home, and look upon those Judgments we have lately past, and those that (for ought we know) may hang over our heads; *Plague, War, Fires*; and who can tell what will be the next Scene? for God uses not to give over, when he takes a People or Person to task, but follows his blow, and will have his end, and bring his purpose to effect.

For if neither the *Gospel*, which we have so long enjoy'd, nor his *Judgments*, that have lain so heavy upon us, can amend us; what can we look for, but for somewhat worse then what has been yet, if we do not apply our selves to him by a hearty Repentance? for if the Kingdom of his *Grace* hath been rejected, the Kingdom of his *Power* will make its way; if the *golden Scepter* has not aw'd us, the *iron Mace* will dash us to pieces; if the Trumpet of the *Gospel* will not serve to awake us, the loud calls of his *Judgments* will rouse us: for *National Judgments call for National Repentance*; which is the *Consequence* of the Argument, by which *Repentance* is inferred from the approach of divine *Vengeance*, which I shall clear by the gradations of divine Method and God's procedure in punishing a wicked People: And they are these,

I. *God many times forbears a People, till the measure of their Iniquity be filled.*

II. *Lesser Judgments are commonly the forerunners of greater, the Preludia to a peremptory Sentence.*

III. *An overspreading Epidemical Profaneness is likely punished with an universal sweeping Destruction.*

IV. *Final Impenitence delivers over a People to final Excision.*

But I should trespass too much upon *Royal Patience*, and possibly surprise my whole Auditory with a *Leuten* mortifying Discourse before the time; should I go on to pursue these Heads.

Only let me remark one Passage out of *Levit. 14. 45.* where we read, when the Plague of *Leprosie* was got into a house, the Walls were scraped, the Stones taken out, and others put in their place, and the House to be new plaister'd: but if the Plague came again and broke out in the House after that, it was then judged a *fretting Leprosie*; and the house was to be broke down, the Stones of it and the Timber thereof and all the Morter of the house; and all to be carried forth out of the City into an unclean place.

The *Moral* is easie: we have been scrap'd with *War* and *Fire* and *Plague*; and possibly this *Peace*, we have for some years enjoy'd, whilst our neighbour Countries have been harrassed with War, has been the *plaistering* of our House; but if our Impieties break out afresh, we may (for ought we know) by God's just Judgment have the House, the whole Fabrick about our ears.

Now who is there amongst us, that is not sensible and apprehensive enough of this Intimation of our danger? but which of us takes a course, as we should do, to prevent it?

Every body is highly displeas'd, that the World goes not, as they would have it, and are casting the blame upon others, and finding out strange expedients for redress.

We

We all can speak our *Fears* aloud; but how few are there, that mind their *Duties* the while?

The only thing the Nation wants, and that which will (and nothing else will) set things to rights, is *Repentance*; that every one would particularly charge these Calamities that have befallen us, and the Disorders we are in, upon himself and his own sins, and say with *David*, *Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly.* My sins and miscarriages have brought these Judgments upon the Land; and then lament the Publick, as much as he will; and with our Saviour, weep over his Countrey in a foresight of those evils may come upon us hereafter. 2 Sam. 24. 17. Luke 19. 41.

If this were seriously done by every one, we should be sure to see better times; which, till we our selves mend, will scarce ever be better.

*Ahab's* humbling himself, and *walking softly*, put a stop to divine Vengeance, and made it walk softly too, and not come till he was laid. And thus may we too procure Peace for our days. 1 Kings 21. 27.

I am not now going to speak in favour of a *Religion*, which beside the fopperies and blasphemies of its *Worship* in their Addresses to the Blessed *Virgin* and other *Saints*, and the absurdities and contradictions of its *Doctrine* in the points of *Infallibility* and *Transubstantiation* and the like; I say, beside these, Maintains and Avows such disloyal and treasonable *Tenets*, such treacherous and bloody *Practices*, as the deposing and murdering of Kings, and the massacring of all they please to call *Hereticks*; such *Tenets* and *Practices* these, as no person (I need not say of ordinary *Piety*, but indeed) of common *Humanity*, if he understand where he is, but must from his heart and soul detest and abominate.

And yet all, who acknowledge the *Papal Supremacy*, must oblige themselves, under pain of being judged *Hereticks* themselves, to approve of these things, when the *Holy Chaur* shall think fit so to determine and act.

I doubt not but there are pious and good persons in that Religion, I dare not say of it. Many of them having been betray'd into it by their Education, and having had no means of knowing better, stay where they are; and some again (what the Author of the *Revelation* tells us) the spiritual-*Babylon*, which assuredly is the Christian *Antichristian Rome*, has enchanted with her Sorceries, and intoxicated with a kind of Love-potion, that they will not understand the great and certain hazards they must run in her adulterous Imbraces. Rev. 18. 23. Rev. 17. 4.

But that is none of my business now; it is only a just grief and amazement, that moves me now, to see some run so far into the other Extrem, till, like the two *Indies*, at last they meet.

There are *Those* among us, who, as if there were no other Character of a true *Protestant* but to be an *Antipapist*, would, if they were let alone, out of an unreasonable Jealousie and *Panick* apprehension of *Popery*, take the readiest course to bring it upon us; as the martyred *Prelate* observ'd above thirty years ago in his speech to the People upon the Scaffold: which was the *Jews* very case, *Venient Romani*, who, for fear the *Romans* should come and take away their place, took an effectual course, by murdering the Son of God, to hasten their own destruction. John 11. 48.

To sum up all: Would we preserve our *Religion* amongst us? such a Religion, as for soundness of *Doctrine*, and purity of *Administration*,  
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and decency of *Worship*, is not to be found among all the Nations of the Earth; would we secure our *Government*? the best constituted Government in the World, if our Laws were but put in due Execution; the fault of which lies in this, that our evil Manners have over-grown the Authority of all Law, insomuch that let what wholesome Orders can be made, our People will not think it their Interest to observe them; but I say, would we indeed have those things ascertain'd to Us and to our Posterities after us, by which our *Lives*, our *Properties*, our Consciences, every thing that is near and dear to us is to be secured, and of which we pretend to have so tender a Jealousie, upon every petty Instance crying out upon *Popery* and *Arbitrary Power*?

What is to be done? In the name and fear of God, let us all in a strict Observance keep up to the Principles of our *Religion*, and to the Rules of our *Government*.

Let us, as the Son of God himself has resolv'd the Case, with all  
 Matth. 22. 21. *Pious* and *Loyal* regards give unto *God* the things that are God's, and unto *Cæsar* the things that are his, in a regular Conformity to the *Kings* and the *Churches* Laws.

This if we do, we are secure; What can hurt us? What is there from within or from without, if we do this, that can indanger either *Church* or *State*? What can be wanting to us for our further safety?

We have an Almighty *God*, whose Eye of Providence watches over us to protect us: We have a gracious *Sovereign*, his Vicegerent, our natural Liege Lord, whose Sacred Person runs the same Risk with the meanest of us, and who makes that clement Use of his Authority, to ask our own Advice, how we would be safe.

And here let me speak it without any suspicion of intending the least Reproach or Flattery; which, God knows my heart, is far from all my thoughts: though it must be piously acknowledged on all hands, that we have not any of us hitherto made a due Improvement of those Advantages God has blest us with.

Did God by his Prophet call forth *Cyrus*, a Heathen Emperour, by Name, a hundred years aforehand, to be the Patron and Nursing-Father of his afflicted Church? what may we expect from a *Christian Prince*, who, besides the earthly Priviledges he was born to, has been from his Infancy the Darling of Heaven, the Beloved of God?

What great services (may we think) doth God himself look for from such a Person, whom he has signalized as if he had been design'd in a manner the *Messias* of the Nation; whose Birth he pointed out by a Noon-day Star, whose Life he hath preserved by a continued series of Miracles? and may he long preserve him.

I speak this out of a great and a good Hope, nay in a certain Assurance, that those Miracles of Mercy, those extraordinary Favours of Heaven, which have been vouchsafed to our *King*, and in him to Us all, are not forgotten, they cannot be lost and come to nought. For the great and good God, who does nothing in vain, did not, could not design those peculiar Vouchsafements, but for gracious Purposes, and to glorious Ends, which, if we, the unworthy People of these Nations, be not extreemly wanting to our selves, will most certainly in due time have their blessed Effect.

May a merciful God, who hath hitherto preserved us, and will still preserve us upon our penitent and devout applications; whose Goodness hath been so great towards us, that nothing, not our very Ingratitude, which



which hath been exceeding great, can equal it ; may he by his Grace so establish the heart of his dear Servant our *Sovereign*, and the hearts of us all his *People*, that we may hold fast to our Establishments, that we may truly repent us all of all our evil Doings, and stedfastly believe the Gospel of his Son, imbracing the Truths of it in the Love thereof ; that so continuing in the Kingdom of his *Grace*, we may be here in this Life protected by the Kingdom of his *Providence* and *Power*, and hereafter in the next Life received into the Kingdom of his *Glory* ! *Amen.*

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*Of further Motives to Repentance.*

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall*, before the Family,  
*March 9. 167 $\frac{8}{9}$ .*

S. Matth. IV. xvii.

—*Repent ; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*



Y Text is it self a *Sermon*; the first that was ever preached at the opening of the Gospel-state. So the forepart of this verse informs us; *From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

The kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God, in Scripture-use admits of five importances; as being taken

I. For the *Evangelical administration* or the state of the Gospel, which commenced at the coming of the *Messias*.

II. For divine vengeance in *National judgments*; particularly for the destruction of the *Jewish Commonwealth*, which happened forty years after our Saviour's passion.

III. For the End of the World, and the *general Judgment* at the last day.

IV. For every mans *particular Doom* at the day of his death.

V. Lastly, for the *state of Glory* and future bliss in the life to come.

Of these senses the *two* first are more principally and directly intended; though the other *three* are of a more universal concernment. For whereas 'tis the Interest of the *Good* and the *Great*, persons of *piety* or *quality*, that mainly lies in those *two*, I mean, in the affairs of *Religion* and the *Nation*; since wicked profane people care not what becomes of *Church*, of the Gospel, or Christianity, so they may save their stakes, and the commonalty do ordinarily escape best, as having least to loose, in the revolutions of *State* and the subversions of *Government*.

And yet we have such Enemies to deal with, our *Romish* adversaries, that there is no one of us all, the worst or the meanest, can promise himself security from those mischiefs, they have designed against us in our Fortunes, in our Lives and Liberties, as well as in our Religion and Government.

I say, whereas those *two* considerations of the kingdom of heaven do in a more peculiar manner affect some orders of men; these *three* of  
*Judg-*

*Judgment, Death, and the World to come* are of that universal extent, that they take in the concerns of all mankind.

And of those *two* I have already in part discoursed. In the handling of these others I shall make use of the same method.

1. To shew that the *kingdom of heaven* in each of those acceptions is *at hand*.
2. From thence to draw some arguments for the inforcement of the duty of *repentance*.

In *that* part I shall be but brief, as being a thing that will be readily acknowledged: and in *this*, because it so much concerns every body, I shall endeavour to be as plain and easie as I may, that I may be understood by all.

Only before I enter upon these Stages, it will not be amiss for me to to step back and enlarge my self somewhat upon those *methods* of procedure, whereby God is wont to inflict *National judgments*; which I then only propos'd, as considerations and *motives* to repentance. And they were these *four*.

1. That God sometimes forbears a people, till they have filled up the measure of their iniquity.
2. That lesser judgments are likely the forerunners of greater.
3. That an overspreading wickedness is often punished with an universal destruction.
4. That Final Impenitence at last gives up a People to final Excision.

1. God many times forbears a People till the measure of their Iniquity is filled; as of the *Amorites* himself says; and then he pours out the full Vials of his wrath. Thus *Iniquity* and *Vengeance*, like two Buckets, let down and draw up one another. Gen. 15. 16.

God's Forbearances therefore are to be lookt on, as dreadful Dispensations; as improving the stock and principal of Vengeance all the while, Interest upon Interest; and those things, which we fondly take for greatest Mercies, prove in this Case our greatest Disadvantages; as *peace, plenty, prosperity*; which do but ripen us for Judgment, by letting us alone to our selves to treasure up Wrath against the Day of Wrath. Rom. 2. 5.

We may sleep in our Security for several years together, but Judgment *fetches no naps*, and Gods awful avengeful eye keeps broad awake, and the Keeper or Observer of *Israel* even in this sense neither slumbers nor sleeps. 2 Pet. 2. 3. Psal. 121. 4.

Our Saviour makes use of the Countrey-man's *Logick* to this Purpose; when you see the Corn in the Fields turn'd white, you say Harvest is nigh; John 4. 35. it is time then for to put in the sickle of Judgment.

And thus God had let this Nation alone for many years together; (for by the way, they are injurious to the Government, who impute our Mis-carriages and Calamities wholly to the present manage of Affairs;) yet at last when a long Peace had mellowed and rotted us, he brake out into Extremity, and has kept on foot his Displeasure against us now for several years; and we know not when he will give over; for

2. Secondly. Lesser judgments are commonly the forerunners of greater, the *Preludia* to a peremptory Sentence. He whets his Sword and bends his Bow and prepares his Arrows, and puts himself into a posture of War, and summons us to Obedience; but if we will not return, he Psal. 7. 12, 13.



he will fight against us *Decretoris*, at sharps.

Psal. 120. 4.

And he has done so by us of this Nation: He has not only whet his *Sword*, but laid it on, making deep gashes, and drencht it in blood. He has not only bent his *Bow*, but drawn it too and shot forth his *Arrows*, even a fore *Pestilence*, which laid us heap upon heap, (pardon me, if I put you in mind of those things which must not be forgotten,) nay, and after the *Arrows* of the Mighty one, came *Coals of Juniper*, which, besides burning up the Churches of God, laid the Honour of the Nation in ashes. He exercis'd us with a *War*, and by our Security gave the Enemy an Advantage over us; and at last he provided a *Peace* for a Trial of our Amendment; that if in this interval we will come to terms with him, we may yet find Acceptance.

But when we cast our eye upon the National humour and carriage under all this, how incorrigible and insensible the most are; there's but little hopes that we are come to an end, or that this *Peace* (we have lately enjoy'd) will be a Harbour after these Storms, or that God has done with us yet. Since

Psal. 90. 5.

3. *Thirdly. An overspreading Epidemical Profaneness is likely punished with an universal sweeping Destruction.* Thus says the Psalmist, וַיִּסַּח, thou carriest them away as with a flood; when God's Indignation overflows all its banks.

Isa. 1. 6.

For when all orders of Persons are corrupt, when, as the Prophet speaks, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no sound part: when sin is grown impudent and walks barefaced, when Religion is scoff'd and Scripture abus'd, and the Dishonour done to God not laid to Heart; what follows? Ask any prudent man, what must follow? I do not say Judicially upon the account of God's just Judgment, but even by plain natural Consequence.

Is not our *Sun* and *Moon* darkned? the Authority and Government of Church and State blemished and bespatter'd? the *Princes* honour grown as cheap as God's among the People? and *Treason* become as familiar and confident as *Blasphemy*, *Swearing* and *Damning*? and how can it be, or how can any one expect it should be otherwise? for when the honour of God, from whom, as the *Supream*, all Power comes, and from whom all *Princes* and *Sovereigns* derive theirs, is once laid under foot; the Reputation of his *Vicegerents* and all inferiour Authorities must needs follow.

And therefore the most *Atheistical Politicians* that ever were, have found it necessary always to set up God's Honour high in the eyes of the People, and have found that aw which *Religion* (though but pretend'd) begets in the minds of men, to be the best *appuy* and prop for any Government to rest upon.

And if the bare Pretence of *Godliness* be of such force, how would real *Piety* and a *Zeal* to God's name dazle the Eyes of the People, and aw their Hearts, and charm their Affections? when they should see Virtue encourag'd, publick Merit rewarded, idle loose Discourse discountenanc'd, Vice punished, Misdemeanours called to account, and the whole Government acted with a Spirit from God and to him?

This, I hope, is, or may be; for God be blessed! we are not yet past hope, if we can but *Repent*. All, even the worst that can befall us, may be prevented by *Repentance*. That is the only way to avert future Judgments, to *repent* us of the evils that we have done, that God may repent him of that evil he intends to bring upon us.

Other-

Otherwise, if we harden our selves under his hand, and will not return to him that hath smitten us, then, which I am afraid to think on,

4. *Fourthly. Final Impenitence delivers over a People to final Ex-cision*; for when God has tried all ways and means with us by *Mercies* and *Judgments*, and finds nothing will do; he will at last throw us away in *Wrath*, and burn us up as dross, and trouble himself no more with us.

This was the *Jews* case; and I pray God it may never be ours. The axe has long lain at the root of our Tree, our *British Oak*.

God's Visitations have been upon us, when our sins did not only, like *Cain's*, lye before our doors, but got into our Houses; but we did not (as *Gen. 4. 7.* we should have done) bring forth the Plague of our Hearts.

The City fire was not quenched with Penitential tears, and therefore broke out afresh, and set the Walls of the Nation on fire.

To go on; what good will our *Peace* do us, if we have not made Peace with God, and rather than want Enemies, are ready to fall out among our selves? We are not tied up in the *Bond of Peace*.

The whole Nation is fermented with Discontents: who can tell what will be next? who would not prefer a *War* before a *Massacre*? another *Plague* and *Fire* to boot, before *Popery* or *Anarchy*?

III. But why should we be so solicitous for a small parcel, for a little spot of Earth, (as this *British Island* is) when the whole *World* is upon its last legs, and the Day of *general Judgment* draws so near? which is another notion of the *Kingdom of Heaven*? which sure must needs be at hand now, and cannot be far from us that live in the ends of the World; when the Apostles lookt upon their times as the *tempora novissima*, the *Hebr. 1. 2.* last days: and *S. Peter* so long ago tells us, *The end of all things is at hand*; *1 Pet. 4. 7.* *be ye therefore sober and vigilant*, which is all one with *Repent*, *for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*; and calls them *ἠπαίοντες*, *scoffers*, *2 Pet. 3. 3.* and little better then *Atheists*, that then, at that time of day, thought otherwise.

If we feel how the pulse of the World beats, and examin all those *Symptoms* our Saviour has given us of its Dissolution, it cannot be long-lived. *Math. 24.*

It is not for any one to determin and prefix a time; but any one may safely say, because it has with Truth been said so often before, that it is not far off.

Now from this Consideration to make out the Necessity, which lies upon us of *Repenting*, I shall give you these four Heads of Meditation.

1. That the Judgment is unavoidable.
2. That there will be a severe Scrutiny and an impartial Sentence past upon every man.
3. That the torments, which are prepared for the wicked and impenitent, are intolerable; and yet
4. That they must be endured to all eternity.

1. First, from the Unavoidableness of coming to Judgment.

*Pericles,*

*Pericles*, a great States-man of *Athens*, when he was called upon to give an account of publick moneys that had past through his hands, and was asked by a friend, what he meant to do; told him, That he never troubled his thoughts with that, but studied only how to get off without giving any Account at all; and belike made that use of some of the publick money, as to provide for his own Safety with it.

2 Cor. 5. 10. But here is no hiding, no keeping out of the way. *We must all appear*, the Apostle tells us, *before the Judgment-seat*. It is not possible to offer that Court a Contempt: the first Summons will serve to bring us in.

Matth. 5. 25. Here will be no Evasion, no shifting of Accounts, when we do make our Appearance: and therefore it is our best and only way to make our Accounts even with God aforehand in this Life.

Matth. 16. 27. Here will be no putting it off, no demurring it in the case; no *Chancery* business here, though the greatest *Court of Equity*; for every one here shall be judged and rewarded according to his works: which is our next thing to consider.

2. *Secondly*, from the *severe and impartial* Proceedings.

There will be nothing of favour to be shewn, no prejudice to be entertain'd; but all will be done in clear and strict Justice. Every one will be weigh'd in an exact Ballance, and with a steady hand.

Rev. 20. 12. The *Books* shall be laid open, and all the passages of our Lives written in *Text* letters upon the very forehead of every man's Conscience.

Luke 13. 27. *Here is the Place, Now is the Time* we may make the Judge our friend by an early application of an ingenuous repentance: but if we put it off till then, it will be too late, when we are at the Bar, to be impleaded for our Misdemeanours, to repent: he will send us away with a *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity; I know you not*.

Psal. 51. 4. And whatever reason any one may have to blame himself, his mouth will be stop'd, and he will have nothing to say against God, but must justify him when he judges, though he sentence him to unsufferable pains. And that is the third.

3. *Thirdly*, the *Torments* the wicked must undergo, cannot, yet must be indured.

There will be no allay, no mixture, as here God's Judgments have; nothing there but pure Wrath.

There will be no ease, no respite, no mitigation, so much as of thoughts in Hell; the Worm of remorse continually gnawing.

And is it not much better, to make use of those things of Conscience, to work Repentance, whilst we are here in this Life, then to reserve them for our perpetual anguish in a place, where they can have no good effect, where no good use can be made of them?

Would not they be better employed to keep us out of those *Torments*, then to add unspeakable grief to those *Torments* for all Eternity? for that is the last thing.

4. *Fourthly*, the *Eternity* of Sufferings.

The discomfort of a miserable *Eternity* cannot be understood, cannot be fathom'd with reason. No line of thoughts can be drawn out so long, as to reach to the further end of it.



In all our sufferings here it is some Consolation, *Non durabunt*, they will not last alway, they will come to an end at last.

The most exquisite tortures, that Disease or Cruelty can bring upon us, if there be no other remedy, *Death* will be so kind, as to give us a release.

But here is no such thing as *Death*, but a Life worse then a thousand Deaths, accompanied with all the horrors and pangs that Death upon all occasions uses to dress its frightful self withal.

Let this remediless Condition then put us upon thoughts of providing against it aforehand by a timely Repentance.

*In bello non licet bis peccare*; we say, in War one cannot be guilty of a fault twice: but I am sure, he that commits a fault about his Eternal state, his miscarriage is never to be redeemed.

Well! but what haste? it may be a great while yet to that day. The World has scap'd 66, and who knows, but it may turn round many a fair year still?

Well! I say, suppose that day be never so slow, as *God is not slack*, as concerning his Promise, *S. Peter* tells us upon this very occasion; yet <sup>2 Pet. 3. 9.</sup> how knowest thou, how near thy own Dissolution may be? and then 'tis all one to thee, how far off the end of the World is.

Whenever thou diest, then is thy *Doomsday*; and thou canst not tell how suddenly that may come upon thee.

And this is the *fourth* importance of the *kingdom of heaven*, as it denotes every man's particular Doom.

IV. That the *Kingdom of Heaven is at hand* and near to every one of us in this sense, daily Experience makes out; some body or other dying every day, and folks Travelling in and out of this great *Inn* the World, continually.

It may be some may make the more slight on it as an ordinary business; but no one, that is wise, will do so, but rather prepare himself that he may not be surpris'd; for who knows, whose turn is to be next? who can tell, but Death may very suddenly give a bounce at his door? for though he has past by often without calling, he will knock at last, and when he summons thou must away. As the Angels did with *Lot*; <sup>Gen. 19. 16.</sup> while thou lingrest, he will lay hold upon thy hand, and hasten, and pull thee away; and then the Lord be merciful unto thee.

Think often of thy own end, which to thee is the end of all things. When thou art gone, all is gone.

Then it will be found that the best Pillow, to lay a dying head on, will be a good Conscience.

Thou must then bid *adieu* to all the spangled glories of the Earth. Honours and Estates will be but weak Cordials.

A thousand Worlds then will be bid for one hours respite; and it cannot be bought so, if thou hadst them to give.

Oh! consider then, what a dangerous Imprudence it will be, to put off thy *Repentance* till the arrests of Death; and to have that great work, which should have been the business of all thy Life, to do now at the very last push, when thou art to die upon it.

Take these *Considerations* along with thee, to convince thee of the Necessity of *Repenting* in time.

1. *Every day, every hour, we live unrepented, sets us more upon the score, and brings us nearer to our reckoning.*

2. *The certainty of death, and the uncertainty of the time, should make us always prepared to die.*

3. *The nearer we draw to the grave without repentance, the less hope still there is of us; but on the other side the grave there is no hope at all.*

1. *Every day, every hour, thou livest unrepented, sets thee more upon the Score, and brings thee nearer to thy Reckoning.*

Thou insensibly every minute run'st further into Debt, and art marching onward to Judgment.

Thy delay both *heightens* and *hastens* thy Account; and by thinking to gain time, thou sadly loosest it.

Whatever we are doing, our Glas runs still, and the sands drop faster then thought; and which way soever we set our face, and bend our course, every step we tread *East, West, North, or South*, advances us directly, and leads us the ready way towards the Grave.

Could we prevail with Time to stand still awhile, and stay for us, till we had pursued this and other Lust; had we a Faith like *Josuah*, that could stop the *Sun* in his full speed, and could do Miracles to gratifie our sins; did not our Debt increase, like Money in the Bank, sleeping or waking, and thus continually add load to our Repentance; we might defer it with the less danger and inconvenience. But yet, which is a thought, must startle us,

2. *The Certainty of dying, and the uncertainty of the time when, should make us always prepared to die.*

The Sword, that hung upon a small thred, with the point downward, over *Damocles* his head, made him have no great stomach for the dainties before him, and shew but sorry Cheer at the Tyrants entertainment.

There is an inevitable Fate hangs over our heads; and it is but a lawnthread, a Cobweb-casualty holds it; the least thing breaks it: and if we are taken unprovided, we are ruined.

If People, in the midst of their Frolicks and Jollities and Vanities and worldly Designs, would but take notice of the *Mene Tekel* upon the Wall; their knees like *Belshazzar's*, would knock together sure, and it would take off the edge of their desires to any thing here below.

What pleasure has a dying man in the Thoughts of any thing he is now leaving behind him?

Such is the Condition of our Mortality, that the best and most profitable way of spending our Life is the continual Meditation of our Death; especially when we consider, that

3. *The nearer we draw to the Grave without Repentance, the less and less Hope still there is of us; but on the other side the Grave no hope at all.*

Here is no *Spes in fundo*, no Hope in the bottom of the Pit, when we are once gone down thither: no middle-state after Death of an Expectancy and Probation for Joy or Torment.

*Purgatory* was but an Invention to get money, and a meer Delusion of silly souls; and those *Limboes* and shirkings, they have found out, will be found to be nothing but the *Fauxburg* and Suburbs of Hell, from whence there is no Redemption.

The *Masses* for the dead may well fill the *Popes* Coffers, but will never help to fill Heaven, or bring one soul thither.

The *Period* of this Life concludes us to an unalterable State: and therefore there being no hope, after this *Scene* of Mortality is over; let us provide in time, and not cast our selves behind hand in the World by our Procrastinations.

Delay brings an habitual Indisposition upon us, and that *to morrow* we promise our selves for our amendment, seldom or never comes; besides that the Distempers of old Age, if we live to it, will render us very unfit to manage such a business, which requires the strength and vigour of mind.

It is a sad Design, to lay the burden of ones youth upon old Age, and a difficult Task to think then at one payment, by an *accumulative Repentance*, to make amends for the Miscarriages of ones whole Life.

On the other hand, if thou dost in time prepare thy self, if thou makest thy Peace with this great Adversary of Nature, *Death*, now whilst thou art in the way with him; then thou maist chearfully wait and expect his summons: Then Death will be to thee but a narrow passage from a transitory miserable Life to a blessed Immortality, and such a Bridge, as, when thou goest over it, thou wilt have great reason to speak well of.

If, I say, thou hast in this Life provided for the next, and insured a futurity of Happiness; then our *last Consideration*, that we are now come to, will bring thee Comfort indeed; when those momentary Afflictions of thy *Repentance*, never to be repented of, shall have wrought for thee an *eternal weight of glory*.

2 Cor. 7. 10.  
2 Cor. 4. 17.

V. That is the last, the *Kingdom of Glory*; and if the End of the world be near, that must of necessity not be far off.

It would run me beyond my time, to shew you the glorious Advantages of this *Kingdom*, above all earthly Crowns and Scepters.

It will be enough to observe, that, as *S. Peter* calls it *αἰώνιον βασιλείαν*, 2 Pet. 1. 11. an everlasting Kingdom, it is in *S. Paul's* style *ὑπερβόη & ἀπείλητος*, Hebr. 12. 28. super-celestial and unmoveable, advanced to the top of Heaven, far above the Region of troublesome and mutable Mortality. 2 Tim. 4. 18.

And sure the expectation of a *blessed Eternity* is argument enough to stir up any one, that has any sense of Honour or Goodness in him, to this Duty of *Repentance*.

God has prepared this Kingdom of his for us from the beginning of the World; and we must prepare our selves for it, if we mean to come thither. Matth. 25. 34.

The *Apostle* makes use of this Consequence to urge Repentance: Having therefore, says he, such Promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2 Cor. 7. 1.



1. Repentance is a necessary qualification to fit us for the Kingdom of Heaven.

2. Repentance, when we consider the heavenly rewards, is a work, however difficult, very well worth our while.

3. Repentance doth not only ascertain us of Heaven, but actually institutes us into it.

1. Repentance is a necessary Qualification to fit us for Glory, for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Rev. 22.15.

Nothing that is unclean must enter there: *ἅγιος ἄνθρωπος*, without are dogs.

Lev. 11.44.

Hebr. 12.14.

'Tis frequently inculcated that *God is holy*, and *Be holy as I am holy*, and *Without holiness none shall see God*; and the very *ratio formalis* of future Blessedness, that in which it wholly consists, is the sight of God, the *Beatifical Vision*.

2. Repentance, be it never so troublesome and painful a Work, is richly worth our while.

Reward is the life of Action, and the encouragement of Industry. What then shall we think of those great sure and lasting heavenly Rewards?

We have a common saying; that *There's no service to the Kings*; but 'tis much more certain, that *There's no service like to Gods*.

Besides the easie terms; God not only rewarding our Services, but helping us too in the Performance, by inabling us with strength from above, and cooperating by his Spirit.

If every penitential tear were a Diamond, and thou didst nothing all thy Life time but drop such liquid Pearl; the Kingdom of Heaven would still be a cheap Purchase, and thou shouldst never have cause to complain of thy bargain. Nay further to encourage thee,

3. Repentance does not only give us a sure Evidence for Heaven, but puts us into actual Possession. It institutes us into our Happiness.

2 Pet. 1.19.

Grace is not only an earnest of future Glory; but is It it self at present: for when the *Day-star* is risen in our Heart, though the *Sun*, the great source of Light, stay behind a while; yet, as upon Day-break, we confidently say it is day. For though the Sun does not actually appear, yet he is a coming, and as the Text tells us, *is at hand*; and sends forth his comfortable Influences at distance.

Thus Grace is but the Inchoation of Glory, and Glory nothing but the Consummation of Grace.

And what ravishing content must this needs be, to enjoy the Morning of our *Eternity* even in this Life; and through the Crannies of our Mortality to have a glimpse and sight of that broad day of *Glory*; which, unlike our longest days, will never have an end!

To shut up all; that we may kindly close with our great Duty and Interest of Repentance: Think with me:

Is it not an infinite Favour and unspeakable Mercy, that a wretched sinner, that has lain rotting in his sins, and been all his life time bound for Hell, may upon the Call of Grace be converted, and setting his face towards Heaven, go on his way with Confidence?

When

When God, the *Father of Mercies*, whose bowels have so long earn'd for his Conversion, shall meet the returning Prodigal, and falling upon his neck, receive him with kisses.

When the *Son of God*, that died for *Love* of him, shall own him with an *Euge!* Well done, and set him at his right hand in the *Glory* of the Father.

When the *Holy Spirit*, the God of all Consolation, that seal'd him, shall present him wiping off his Tears.

When the whole *Court of Heaven*, that blessed *multitudes* and throng'd Assembly of *Saints* and *Angels*, with lowd shouts of joyful Gratulations, t.ll all the *Spheres* with redoubled *Eccho's* of their own Musick ring again, shall welcome one single *Penitent*, more then ninety nine righteous Persons, into the *Kingdom of Heaven*;

Luke 15. 7.

*To which, God of his Mercy, by his Grace, bring us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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## Of God's pardoning Grace.

A Sermon Preached at S. James's Chappel,  
March 12. 167 $\frac{5}{6}$ .

### Psalm LI. ix.

*Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.*



**H**IS *Psalm*, ye all know, was composed by *David*, to declare his unfeigned *Penitence* for those foul sins and scandalous miscarriages, he had been guilty of in the matter of *Uriah*; which was the great blot of that Saints life and memory: and it is made up partly of *Confessions* and *Acknowledgments* of his great crimes and high misdemeanours, partly of *Petitions* and *Supplications*, wherein he intercedes for Pardon, and prays for Forgiveness. So that those *two Sentences*, our Church has hence transcrib'd into the beginning of her publick *Offices*, are a Summary and Abridgment of the whole *Psalm*; the former, that he *acknowledg'd his sin, and his fault was ever before him*, being the *Confession*; and this *later* being the *Supplicatory* part, wherein he begs pardon for his Transgression, that *God would hide his face from his sins, and blot out all his iniquities*.

March. 7. 7.

And this was but necessary to compleat the duty of *Confession*, which without this additional act of Devotion might have look'd rather like a wicked boast and a daring defiance of Divine Justice; God having no where promised us his Pardon, or indeed any other blessing without our *asking*; nor that we shall find Acceptance with him, unless we *seek* it; nor that he will open the gates of his Mercy to penitent sinners, and grant them re-admission into his Favour again, but upon their earnest *Applications* and importunate *Knocking*.

Wherefore the *Psalmist* did not think it enough for him to have his *sin ever before him*, unless he could prevail with a Merciful God, to *hide his face* from seeing it; or to *acknowledge his Transgression* himself, except it would please a gracious God upon his humble suit to acknowledge satisfaction, to cancel all his debts and obligations, and to *blot out all his iniquities*. *Hide thy face*, says he, *from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities*.

In



In which words we have *two Deprecations*, or supplicatory Propositions; *Hide thy face from my sins*, that one; and *blot out all mine iniquities*, that the other: which though different in Expression, yet agree in Sense, as being *Synonymous* and of like importance, both tending to the same thing; to wit the asking *Forgiveness*; yet so as that the *Latter*, as is usual in these holy Compositions, takes an advantageous rise from the *former*: since it is more to have *all his iniquities blotted out*, then barely to have *God's face hidden from his sins*.

Again, in each *Deprecation* there are *two* things to be considered.

1. The *Object* or Thing to be pardon'd; *Sins* in the one, and *Iniquities* in the other.

2. The *Act* of Pardon it self delivered likewise in two forms of speech; that God would *hide his face from his sins*, which argues them to be *Offences*, *παρεσβύματα*, and that he would *blot out all his iniquities*, which shews them to be *Debts*, *ἐκδηλώματα*, as in the *Lord's Prayer* they are call'd.

Where *first* we shall *explain* the meaning of the Words, what is here intended by *sins*, what by *iniquities*: what God's *hiding his face from our sins*, and what his *blotting out our iniquities* may import.

Next we shall gather some *Observations* touching the nature of *pardoning Grace*, which is here set forth under these Terms of God's thus *hiding his face from our sins*, and *blotting out all our iniquities*: not only a Suspension and Forbearance of *punishment* due to our sins, which is the *hiding of his face* from them, but also a full and final discharge of the *guilt* it self, which is the *blotting out of all our iniquities*.

Then we shall lay down some *Directions*, how sinners may attain this *Pardon* and general release.

Afterward to encourage us to a diligent use of those *Directions*, we shall speak of those *Advantages* and those comfortable *Effects* and consequences, which usually attend the pardon of sin.

And in the *last* place, we shall propose some *Marks* and *Notes*, by which a sinner may know, whether he hath attain'd *pardon* or not; which will be mainly these *two*, a faithful and sincere Pursuance of those *Directions*, and a gracious experimental Sense of those blessed *Advantages* which *Pardon* brings along with it.

I. *First* then for the *sense* and meaning of the Words.

By *sins* we may understand Offences of a high nature, wilful and deliberate Transgressions, such as are mightily provoking in the sight of God, from which therefore he prays God to *hide his face*.

By *iniquities* may be understood the common Frailties and ordinary Miscarriages of our lives, those which with the greatest care we can use, cannot well be avoided; such as we daily run on score with God, which therefore he desires may be blotted out.

Now though *sins* in that sense are of a greater and deeper Concern than *iniquities* are; yet to have *all our iniquities blotted out* is much more than that God should only *hide his face from our sins*. For every *sin* is an *iniquity*, though every *iniquity* be not a *sin* in the strict notion of it, and so by *blotting out all our iniquities*, God cancels all our *sins* too; which makes good the rise and Improvement of sense in the latter part of the verse above that in the former; a thing which, I took notice of before, is frequently and almost constantly observ'd in the B. of *Psalms*.

Again,

Pfal. 55. 1.  
Ezek. 39. 29.

Again, God's *hiding his face* from any thing, is his passing it by and overlooking it, his not regarding it, his taking no notice of it, as appears by several Instances of Scripture, where this *Phrase* is used. So when he does not answer us upon our Call, when he will not hear our Requests, nor consider our Complaints, nor send us any relief in our Distresses, he is said to *hide his face* from our Prayers, from our Afflictions, and to hide himself in the needful time of Trouble, to make as if he did not see or hear us.

Proportionably to *hide his face from our sins* is to pass them by without any notice or regard, to overlook them; particularly to suspend Sentence, not to proceed to Judgment against us, but to forbear us, and to keep back that wrath which is due to our Provocations, from breaking out into a speedy Execution of Vengeance; as we find the word used Numb. 20. 4. in the case of that Criminal, who should *give up his seed*, that is, sacrifice his Child, to *Moloch*; says he, *If the people of the land do any ways hide their eyes from the man, and kill him not*; that is, if out of any partiality or Favour to him, they spare his life, and do not execute the law upon him.

By *this* then is meant his Forbearance of us, his not inflicting a present Punishment upon us, his not pouring out his Indignation, which we do so justly provoke by wilful deliberate acts of sin; his not taking Advantage as he might do, but allowing us time to repent and work out our Reconciliation.

And this is properly that act of Forgiveness the *Latins* call *Ignoscencia*, to seem not to know, not to resent Injuries, and to put up Affronts which are done to his heavenly Majesty.

Pfal. 103. 10.

And, *O blessed God*, may every one of us, sinners as we are, say, how do we all of us stand obliged to thy goodness, that *thou hast not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities*? that thou hast not cut us off in the height of our lusts, and the strength of our years? that thou hast not struck us with some signal Judgments in the very commission of our daring sins? but hast spared us, and not call'd us to a present Account, but hast lengthened out our Time and thy own *Patience*, and given us *space of Repentance*, and left us still in a possibility of Salvation, and hast from time to time *hid thy face* from our provoking sins, even when we have boldly and deliberately dared thy Justice to thy face!

Lam. 3. 22.

O praised be that unspeakable *Mercy* of thine, that we are yet alive to speak of it! for we must acknowledge, it has been of thy meer *Mercy* that we have not been long since consumed in our sins, for our sins!

And this as to the *hiding of his face*.

Ezek. 33. 16.

But then to *blot out all our Iniquities* is so to forgive them, as that they shall never be remembered more; as he says in *Ezekiel*, that *if the wicked man turn from the evils that he has done, and become a new man; the wickedness, that he hath formerly committed, shall not be remembered against him: in the righteousness that he hath done his Soul shall live*.

And

And this is a *Metaphor* taken from the usual Discharge of *Debts* and Release of *Suits* and *Actions*, we may have against any man, when we wipe out the *score*, and cancel all *Bills* and *Obligations* whatever, and give him a free general pardon and quit-claim of all *Dues* or *Demands* from the beginning of the World.

And this is that act of *Forgiveness*, which in *Latin* is called *Condonatio*, an absolute and full Discharge.

And this is the very Term and Tenour of *Evangelical Pardon*, as himself hath declar'd it by his Prophet *Esay* 43. 25. *I, even I am he, that blot out thy Transgressions for mine own name sake, and will not remember thy sins.*

You see then that his blotting out our sins is more than *hiding his face* from them.

*That* may suspend the *Punishment*; *this* clears us from the *Guilt*.

*That* implies a *Forbearance* for the present; *this* denotes a final Discharge.

By *that* we are a while preserv'd from *Wrath*; by *this* altogether acquitted from the obligation of *Guilt*.

In *that* he may have some respect to our future Amendment; in *this* he has rather regard to our past Repentance.

And, O gracious God, since thou art pleas'd thus to allow us further time and *space* for Repentance, be graciously pleas'd also to afford us the *Grace* of Repentance: and since thou hast in thy *Christ*, our *Jesus*, provided an *Atonement* to thy *Justice* for our sins, through that full *Satisfaction* he made to thee by his Sacrifice upon the *Cross*; grant us a true and lively *Faith* in him and his *Merits*, whereby we may be fully and finally acquitted and discharged from the guilt of all our *sins*, and may have all our *iniquities* blotted out in that most precious *Blood* he shed for our *Redemption*; that our *Souls* being washed and cleansed in those sacred streams, may be presented blameless; and being accepted by thee in the Welbeloved, may live in thy sight, being rais'd to a newness of life by the quickning operations of thy blessed *Spirit*!

And this as to the blotting out of all our iniquities.

II. The Words thus explain'd will afford us two or three useful *Remarks*, by which we may inform our selves of the nature of God's pardoning Grace, which he vouchsafes to penitent sinners upon their humble address to him: Which is the *second* thing we propos'd to speak of.

And this *Grace* of his, whereby he pardons sin, according to the two-fold Expression here us'd, consists mainly in these two things.

1. In the divine *Forbearance* and *Long-sufferance*, whereby he invites and expects our Repentance, which is call'd his *hiding his face*,

2. In a full *Absolution* and final *Discharge* upon our Repentance, which is here and elsewhere styl'd his blotting out all our *iniquities*.

1. Observe we God's gracious *Forbearance* in passing by our greater *Offences*, in taking no notice at present of our wilful Provocations, as in Justice he might do; in that he *hides his face* from our sins.



2 Pet. 3. 9.

For though *Forbearance* be no *Acquittance*; and our sins, although they do not presently meet with their due Punishment, yet may and will, if we live in them still unrepented of, and slight God's goodness, be brought to a sad reckoning at last; yet 'tis an Argument of God's great mercifulness and his ready inclinations to forgive, that he does not punish us in the very fact, that he does not take Advantage of us at the very instant of our Provocations, that he awaits our return, and by his *long-sufferance* designs to lead us to Repentance.

But this phrase of God's *hiding his face* deserves our nearer Consideration.

I know it is many times taken for a sign of his Displeasure, as *Esay* tells us, 59. 2. *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, or have made him hide his face from you, that he will not hear*: and so with a more dreadful resentment, 64. 7. *Thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us because of our iniquity*.

But 'tis one thing, when he *hides his face from us*; another when he *hides his face from our sins*.

Gracious God, be always pleas'd to hide thy face from our sins, but never hide it from our Persons or from our Prayers; which is the severest token of thy heaviest Displeasure!

Well! but how could the *Royal Prophet* pray, that God would *hide his face from his sins*? how is this consistent either with his *Omniscience*, by which he cannot but see and know all things; or with his *Holiness*, by which he naturally hates sin; or with his *Justice*, by which he stands oblig'd to punish it, and not give it the least Countenance, so much as by his hiding his face from it? To these we shall briefly make answer.

Psal. 115. 5.

And first for his *Omniscience*: what does *David* here mean, that God should dissemble his knowledge, that seeing he should not see, and perceiving he should not understand; that, as the *Idols* are described, having eyes, he should not see with them?

Hebr. 4. 13.

Far be it from us to imagine, that we can escape the eyes of an all-seeing God, to whom all things lie open and naked, expos'd to his sight; that our sins can be so covered, or his Countenance so hid, that he should not see us in all we do, and be a witness to all our Actions, who understands our very thoughts afar off, and from whom nothing (even that we design in our darkest and deepest retirements) can be hid.

Psal. 139. 2.

So he assures us himself in his Prophet *Jer.* 16. 17. that *his eyes are upon all our ways*; they are not hid from his face, neither is our iniquity hid from his eyes, be it never so closely and secretly acted.

I, but we must take notice of the Difference of Expression. It is one thing for us to go about to *hide our sins from God's face*; That as it is an impossible shift, so 'tis the highest Aggravation of our guilt, when we think to elude his *Omniscience*, or fancy that we can hide our selves, or cover our sins, from him. It is another thing for God himself to *hide his face from our sins*; That is his Favour and Clemency to spare us and let us alone, to see what we will do, as desirous rather of our Amendment than of our Destruction.

Again,

Again, it is *one* thing for us by Dissimulation to cover our sins; he that does that, the Wise man says, *shall not prosper*: Another thing for God in Mercy to cover them: for *blessed is that man*, the Psalmist tells us, *whose sins are thus cover'd*. Prov. 28. 27. Psal. 22. 1.

But supposing this implies no evasion of his Omniscience, whereby he knows and understands all things; how is this fairly reconcileable with his Holiness, that he should thus by a seeming Compliance, or at least Connivance with sinners, take no notice of gross sins and foul Misdemeanours in the very acting of them?

This does not so much seem to argue Levity and Gentleness, as Consent, according to that of the 50th Psalm, *vers. 18. Thou sawest a thief and consentedst with him*; and thus as it is afterward in that very Psalm, wicked men are apt enough to think God to be such an one as themselves: Verse 21. We make him Conscious of our sins, and beg of him to keep our Counsel.

God forbid, that a Holy God should have such unworthy Imputations laid upon him, as though he encourag'd or countenanced any of his best Saints, or dearest Children, in their sins, by hiding his face from them in this sense! No; he is of purer eyes than to behold any iniquity with the least Approbation; and even upon this account, as well as upon that other of his merciful Forbearance, he hides his face from our sins, that he may not be provoked to a sudden Vengeance, since he cannot behold sin without shewing his high Displeasure; as appears not only by the Wicked, *Psal. 34. 15. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth*; that is, he sets his face against them, and seeing their obstinate and presumptuous wickedness, cannot but by remarkable Judgments cut them off: but also in the case of the godly themselves, as appears *Psal. 90.* where complaining of Divine Chastisements, *verse 7. We are consum'd by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled*; he sets down the reason, *verse 8. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy Countenance.* Hab. 1. 13.

God then, who is *dreadful in Holiness*, has that detestation for sin, Exod. 15. 11. that he cannot behold it in any one without punishing it, and therefore is said to hide his face from it for a time in Mercy, that he may not be oblig'd presently to punish it, but may leave the Sinner room for Repentance.

Once more; if this expression of God's *hiding his face* from our sins bring no Prejudice to his Omniscience; and lay no Blemish upon his Holiness; how will his Justice be acquitted? or doth he, as Samuel expostulates the case, *1 Sam. 12. 3. receive a Bribe at any of our hands to blind his eyes therewith*; or, as it is in the original, *to make him hide his eyes at us*? or do we dare him so with our Provocations, as to hoodwink and blindfold his Justice, as we read they serv'd his Son our Saviour, Luke 22. 64. and then bid him prophesie who struck him?

These indeed were audacious Attempts, such Insolencies, as the Almighty would not take from sinners.

His Justice is not blind, as we commonly paint her, nor can she be blinded; but it is his Mercy interposes, puts a stop to the proceedings of Justice, and gains respite for the Criminal to come in and make his Peace.

And this is that we may learn from this manner of speech here used of God's *hiding his face from our sins*; that our *sins*, that is, our wilful Transgressions and presumptuous Miscarriages, though God may be prevail'd with to *hide his face* from them for a time, to take little notice of them at present; yet are such as will not meet with so immediate and absolute a forgiveness, but will require an explicate and lasting Repentance, before they have a full Pardon afforded to them; which for lesser iniquities is more easily obtain'd.

And now consider with me the wonderful Goodness of God's *nature* in himself and of his *will* towards us, that he doth as it were lay aside all his glorious *Attributes* almost, to serve us; and shews us *Mercy*, even in desparagement to his infinite *Knowledge* and *Holiness* and *Justice*; that, though he cannot but see and know our sins, because he knows all things, yet he takes no notice of them: and because they cannot be hid from his face, he *hides his face* from them; though he cannot but abominate *sin*, and hate it with a perfect hatred, yet he loves and bears with the *sinner*; and though he stand obliged as a righteous *Judge* to punish sin, wherever he finds it, yet he delays the punishment in expectation of our Repentance.

Thus doth his *Mercy* rejoyce against Judgment, *Jam. 2. 13.* *ἡ ἀγαθὴ χάρις ἡμῶν*, it triumphs and *crowns over* all those other *Perfections* of his Nature, which ingage him into severity against us, by her Intercessions prevailing first for his *Forbearance*, and then upon our Repentance for his *Forgiveness*.

Psal. 5. 1.

2.

And this is the *first* act of *Pardon*, or, at least, step towards it, that God doth *not rebuke us in his anger, nor chasten us in his hot displeasure*; that there is a suspension at least of Punishment, a *Reprieve* in order to a full *Pardon*; which follows in the next place, *the blotting out of all our Iniquities*, so as never to be remembered more; and *this* is the removal of *Guilt*, a total and final *Discharge* for the *future*, as *that* is a *Forbearance of Vengeance at present*.

*That* in a manner is but present *Impunity*; *this* is an absolute *discharge* for ever; and that

1. Total: *all mine iniquities*; and
2. Final: by being *blotted out*.

Matth. 5. 26.

Job 9. 3.

Hebr. 7. 25.

1. Here is a *total* Discharge; for if any one sin or iniquity should hang upon the file unpardon'd, that one were enough to indanger our eternal State. We shall *not come out of prison*, our Saviour tells us, *till we have pay'd the utmost, the last farthing*; If but *one farthing* remain due still and unpaid, it will be all one with us as if the whole Sum were still owing; we of our selves being unable to pay our Debts in whole or in part; so that if it be left to our selves to pay, we have no hopes of ever coming out: For since every *Trespas* is *infinite*, as committed against an infinite Majesty, we of our selves should not be able to answer him *one of a thousand*. It is his *Mercy* to us then in Christ to forgive all at once, who has paid down the whole Price of our Ransom in that one Oblation he made for sins, and is able to save all that believe in him to the utmost, even to the utmost farthing.

Col. 2. 14.

2. 'Tis a *final* discharge. Being once forgiven, the business never comes into Judgment more: The *Bond* is cancelled, the *Record* is taken off, and the *Suit* dismissed the *Court*. So 'tis said, he *blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances against us*. The Writing is razed and defaced



faced; the scribble and blurs of our whole Life cross'd and stand for nothing. All now is, as if it had never been done. The *Score* is wiped out; there is no remembrance of it any more. Here's an Acquittance and general Release for all that is past.

Further, 'tis not only being *discharg'd* from our guilt, but there flows and follows hence a high and glorious *Privilege*; that after our *iniquities* are *blotted out*, we our selves are *justified*, and lookt upon and *accepted* as righteous persons in God's sight, by the righteousness of Christ.

Thus *Isa. 44. 22.* *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.* How are clouds blotted out? Why? by the rays of the Sun their darkness is dispell'd, and a glorious light brought in in the stead: so our iniquities are covered and brightned with Christ's Righteousness; whereupon the *Apostle* says, *he is made Righteousness to us*, and the *Prophet* before that, calls him *the Lord our Righteousness*. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Jer. 23. 6.

*O blessed Lord*, who took'st upon thee our *Sins* together with our *Nature*, and wast thy self *reckon'd amongst Transgressors*, that thou might'st cancel the hand-writing of the Law which was against us, by satisfying the Law for us; and didst further provide a Righteousness of thine own for us, even the Righteousness of God through Faith in thee; grant us thy grace, that we may by a sincere *Repentance* render our selves capable of that *Righteousness* thou hast wrought for us; and by a true *Faith* apply it, and by a new *Obedience* follow it and copy it out in our Practice and Imitation, that we may find the Comfort of having our sins *pardon'd*, and our selves *justified* by the *merits* of thy *Blood*, when we find our selves *sanctified* by the *grace* of thy *Spirit*; Luke 22. 37. Rom. 3. 22.

Which *Forgiveness* and full *Pardon* of our sins and iniquities, how it may be attain'd, is the *third* head of our Discourse, wherein I promis'd to lay down some *Directions* how to attain this Grace of *Pardon*; and those are

1. Sincere and hearty *Contrition*.
2. Earnest and importunate *Supplication*.
3. A lively *Apprehension* of Christ and his Merits.
4. A careful *Indeavour* after *Amendment* and reformation of Life.

Nor will any one of these serve the turn without the other, but all of them are absolutely necessary.

1. *Contrition*. Labour to be thoroughly convinced of thy *sins*; consider and lay to heart thy dangerous Estate; spread thy sins before thy own Conscience first, before thou lay them before God in thy Confession.

Represent them to thy self in the dismal *landskip* of all their aggravating *Circumstances*, and dreadful *Consequents*.

Apply to thy soul the *terrors of the Law*, that they may bring thee to Christ. Gal. 3. 24.

Consider the *Threats* of the Gospel, how unworthily thou hast lived of its *Promises*, what is due to thee for neglecting so great Salvation, *Hebr. 2. 3.* how thou hast been a servant to sin more then to thy Saviour, for *his* Rom. 6. 16.  
*servants we are to whom we obey.*

Consider

Consider sadly, how thou hast offended thy God, griev'd his *Spirit*, despised that Redemption he has wrought for thee by his *Son*, wounded Him and thy own Conscience to boot, and let these things work a deep sorrow in thy heart.

If that heart of thine be hard and stony, strike it with *Moses* his Rod, with *legal* terrours; and let the *waters* of thy penitential tears gush out and flow, to wash off the *filth* and refresh the *scorchings* of thy guilty Conscience.

Fruit is first bruise'd and squeeze'd before it yields its precious liquor; Stones, and the hardest Metals themselves, when they are melted down, will run.

Then, when thou art thus *contrite*, when thou hast broken thy heart, and melted it with the Coals of divine Love, thy soul will pour out it self; that is the *next*.

2. *Supplication*. Get thee to thy Lord right humbly; beseech his *Mercy* to accept thy Repentance, and his *Grace* to improve it. Let him not alone, till thou hast obtained a gracious answer.

Spread thy iniquities before him, having blotted them out first with thine own tears. Lament thy Condition with *strong cries* and *unutterable groans*.

Joel 2.14.

It may be as the *Prophet* says, nay, assure thy self that it will be so, that *the Lord will*, upon thy Repentance, *repent him* also of the evil, and leave a blessing behind him.

But then know, that for thy sins *wilfully* and *deliberately* committed, it is no easie matter to be discharged.

Thy daily slips thou mayest take off the file with thy daily returns; but *those* must cost thee more pains, and a longer time.

For *them* a Repentance of course may serve; but for *these* there must be a course of Repentance.

Persevere in thy Applications, and then he will be intreated to *hide his face* from thy Sins, and will not hide it from thy Prayers. But then

3. *Lay bold on Christ*; plead his *Passion* and *Merits*. In his *name* and *mediation* thy Supplications must hope to speed, and have their designed Effect.

Rev. 8.3.

Hebr. 7.25.

Let thy *Prayers* be perfum'd in the *Censer* of thy *High Priest*, and be mingled with his Intercessions.

John 14. 13.

His is a prevailing *Name*; whatsoever thou shalt ask in his name, he has promised thee, shall be obtained.

His is an all-conquering *Merit*, as infinite as that *Justice* of God is, which thou hast offended.

Bathe thy soul in his *Blood*, the soverain Balsom of a wounded Conscience.

Consider all the stages of his grief, which he underwent for thee, and let them cause the *Sympathy* of thy sorrow, and the *Assurance* of thy faith; sorrow for thy own sins, and trust to his *Sufferings*.

And now let the *Men of reason* tell me, why God inflicted such punishment upon his *Son*, an innocent Person, if not for *Satisfaction*.

Where-

Wherefore as thou pleadest for God's *Mercy* upon resentment of thy own *sins*; so be sure to plead his very *Justice* too, upon confidence of thy Saviour's *Merit*.

But then remember, as *Faith* in Christ requires a previous *Repentance*; so it doth as necessarily oblige thee to a following *Obedience*.

4. *Amendment of Life*; or else all thou hast done hitherto falls short, and comes to nothing.

To pretend *Contrition* for sin, to be much in *Prayer* for pardon of it, to apply to *Christ's Satisfaction* for it, and yet to go on in thy *sin*, is to give the lie to all thy other pretences, to mock God and thy own Soul to boot.

Do not deceive thy self in thy greatest Concern. Thy *faith*, by which thou art to be *justified*, is to be justified it self by thy *works*.

Thou must forsake thy sins, if thou would'st have them pardon'd; so thou art told, *Whoso confesseth and forsaketh, shall find mercy*, Prov. 28. 13.

Lay down the weapons of thy hostility, and surrender thy self, if thou would'st be reconcil'd to thy great Adversary.

Let thy Conscience be sprinkled from dead works, that thou maist live by thy faith.

This is the surest way of being forgiven thy sins, to shew thy own detestation of them; the only Method of being reconciled to God, to have an unreconcilable hatred of them, which made him thy enemy.

And when thou find'st that the *power* of thy sin is broken, it is a very good token, that the *guilt* of them is also taken away.

And when this is, how blessed must such a man needs be? which is our *fourth* Consideration.

IV. The blessed *Effects* and *Consequents* of this pardoning Grace: And those are these *four*.

1. The *Favour* of God, as now reconciled in *Christ*.

2. The *Peace* and Quiet of *Conscience*.

3. The *Assurance* of thy *present Acceptance*.

4. The *Ascertaining* of thy *future Hopes*.

1. The *Favour* of God as now reconciled in *Christ*. Do not mistake this *favour* to consist in *temporal* Benefits, in *secular* Mercies; these are common to good and bad; he causes his *Sun* to rise and his *Rain* to fall on all alike. March. 5. 45.

Pride not thy self in this reflexion, that he has blest thee with *Wealth*, that he prospers thy way in the World, and the like; this he doth to the wicked also to fatten them for destruction.

A man loves his *Child* better, though he does not feed him so well as his *Swine*; because that is fed for slaughter.

How does thy *soul prosper*? for every man truly does as his soul does: Mind his *spiritual* Blessings in Christ; these are distinguishing Mer- 3 John 2.

If thou hast this *Pardon*, thou hast the light of God's Countenance shining upon thy inner man, and art in the same Condition as a child restor'd to his father's love.

And



And this thou maist know by thy own dutiful *Behaviour* and ingenuous *Affections*, as well as by his kind *Reception*; if thou givest him cause by thy *filial* diligence to rejoice in thy *Return*, as thou thy self rejoicest in his *Reconcilement*.

2. This *Favour* procures the *Peace* and quiet of *Conscience*.

All that the *Philosophers* aspired to, was, a *serenity* and *tranquillity* of *Mind*, *ἀμεγξία*, *undisturbedness*; to be indifferent and unconcern'd in the things of *Life*. But alas! this was only a *moral* attainment: and yet seeing they did not understand the *Fall of man*, the *Corruption of nature*, and the *Remedy of sin*, it was much they went so far.

We have greater Advantages for this by much in *Christ*.

What ease is a man in, when his sins are *pardon'd*? for *Conscience*, if it be at all sensible, cannot be quiet, whil't 'tis unpardon'd. And certainly a *troubled* unquiet *Conscience* is one of the greatest *Diseases*.

'Tis true, some persons take more pains to make their *Conscience* *insensible* than *quiet*, and flatter themselves with carnal *Security*, that all is well, because they are got *past feeling*.

Eph. 4. 19.

This is the worst of Conditions thou can't be in; for it is not thy *sins* in this case, but thy *Conscience* is mortified.

1 Tim. 4. 2.

Wherefore by *peace of Conscience* I do not mean a *sleepy* drowsie *Conscience*, nor a *fear'd* *Conscience*. Those are quiet *Consciences* indeed in some sense, as *Creatures* that are dead or sound asleep may be said to be quiet.

2 Pet. 2. 3.

But this is no state of *Peace* in *Conscience*; for if it ever awake, as it will one day, when, though they have made shift to lull their *Conscience* asleep in this life, and have flattered themselves with *Peace* and *Safety*, a *sudden* unthought of *destruction* shall come upon them, which they shall not escape, 1 *Thess.* 5. 3. for *Judgment* doth not sleep, though *Conscience* may.

3. The *gracious Assurance* of thy present *Acceptance*, both of thy person and performances.

Now what an *Incouragement* must this needs be to any pious soul, to any servant of *God*, to find himself in *Favour*, to see all the applications and addressees of his *Duty* accepted by his heavenly *Sovereign*?

I appeal to any *Loyal Subject*, to any *Worthy Courtier*, what cheer it puts into his *Heart*, what vigour it gives to all his *Indeavours* in that station and relation he stands in, to have a *gracious King's* countenance and approbation for whatsoever he does in his service according to *Law* and the *Duty* of his *Place*, that he is, as we say, *rectus in Curia*, and stands fair in the *Eye* and *Opinion* of his *Master*.

4. The *Ascertaining* of thy future *Hopes*.

Present *Acceptation* goes a great way with a faithful *Servant*; but to have, beside and beyond this, an *Ascertainment* of what *Expectations* and future *Rewards* such a *Servant* may look for at the hands of a kind *Master*; this cannot but *raise*, as well as *quiet*, his spirit.

This will not only *fix* but elevate him in his *Loyalty*.

This, as it will make him *constant* to his *Duty*, to persevere and hold on with a resolution never to forsake such a bountiful *Master*, that will so highly requite his mean services in the end; so it will work him up to that *ingenuous* Consideration, that he cannot do too much for such a kind *Master*, that will think nothing too much for him, such a faithful *Servant*.

And

And this *Assurance*, both at present and for hereafter, doth the sense of divine *Pardon* and Reconciliation naturally beget; since God, as he is full of spontaneous goodness, and abounds with Mercies, which we cannot challenge, doth usually outdo all Obligations to his very *Enemies*, and will much more do so to his Friends; especially upon a *Reconcilement*, to take off all Distrust of his kindness.

Which that we may the better assure our selves of, there remains in the last place to give the

V. *Marks*, whereby a Sinner may know, whether he hath attain'd this *Pardon*; and those are two:

1. *A faithful and sincere pursuance of those Directions.*

I begin with *that first*, as the surest Tryal; for he that neglects his *Duties*, ought not to think himself concern'd in the *Priviledges*.

Art thou then truly *Contrite*? Dost thou grieve and mourn for thy sins, Matth. 5. 4. that thou maist be comforted? Art thou *weary and heavy laden*? then Matth. 11. 28. maist thou hope upon thy coming to Christ to find rest for thy soul?

Has the *Law* with its *Threats* prevail'd with thee to betake thy self to *Gospel-Promises*?

And when thy heart has been dissolv'd and melted down, hast thou pour'd it out in *Prayers* before the Lord?

Hast thou made *Confession* of thy sins, and *supplication* for *Pardon* at the Throne of Grace?

Dost thou for thy *daily infirmities* and *surreptions* beg daily Forgiveness? and hast thou for thy sins of *deliberation* with a like deliberate Repentance kept on a course of humbling and afflicting thy soul, till thou hast prevailed with thy God for a Discharge? and dost thou find that the power of thy sins is gone, which is the surest sign of its *guilt* being done away?

And hast thou sprinkled thy Conscience from dead works, as with thine own penitent *Tears*, so with thy Saviour's *meritorious Blood*?

Hast thou thrown thy burthen upon him, who is able to *save to the utmost* those that put their Trust in him? Hebr. 7. 25.

And dost thou add a new *Obedience* to thy *Faith*, and resolve to practise as thou believest, and to confirm and evidence thy *Sorrow* for thy life past by thy *Reformation* of it hereafter, and to make good the Detestation of thy sins by the Care of avoiding them for the time to come?

If it be thus with thee, *Sinner*, then maist thou entertain fair hopes that thy sins are forgiven; then maist thou go on further, and with comfort search for those blessed *Advantages* which attend the *Pardon* of sins. That is the second *Mark*.

2. *A gracious sense of those blessed Consequents of Pardon of sins.*

I need not now ask the question, whether those that can truly answer the former part, which I have already spoke to, do feel those *gracious Effects* upon their spirits; for certainly they do; since, if we do our parts, God will not be wanting in his; yet to continue my Method, I shall in the same manner proceed briefly upon this *Head* also.

Dost thou then, after thou hast done this on thy part, experiment in thy self that *Favour of God*, that *Peace of Conscience*, and those *gracious and glorious Assurances*?

Dost thou find God's *Countenance* shining upon thy soul, not only to give thee a *Celestial light* for thy *Direction*, but a *supernatural Warmth* for thy *Incouragement*?

Is all well within, and thy *Conscience* at ease, not through security of sinning, but through an Apprehension of sins forgiven and forsaken?

Is thy *soul* satisfied in her dutiful approaches to her God with his *Love* at present, and possessest and fill'd with joyful Assurances for the future?

Isaiah 1. 23.

I must say to thee then, as the Angel did to the blessed Virgin, *Hail soul*, whatever thou art, *full of grace, and highly favoured of God*. Rest thy self upon thy faithful *Creator* and gracious *Redeemer*, and know that with thy *Christ* thou hast all things thou canst wish or desire.

I grant after all, that there are *interceptions* of this divine *Light* and *Comfort*, and seeming *derelictions*, wherewith it pleaseth God sometimes to exercise the best and dearest of his *Saints*; but I have now been speaking plainly to plain ordinary *Christians*, and giving them *Rules* in a rude draught how to try and examin their State how it stands betwixt them and God; and those that at any time find it thus with themselves, as I have described, may retrieve and recover themselves again upon any loss, by applying those *Rules* afresh.

And as to *Christians* of a higher form, who have their senses more exercised in these things, and therefore are more accurate and tender in their Observations of that variety God uses in *dispensing*, or for Tryal sometimes *concealing* his Love toward them; that is a Subject would require a just Discourse of it self, and is not now to be attempted.

Psal. 27. 8.

Only I shall say at present, that when God doth break off his *Inter-courses* with such, or seems to *Eclipse* his countenance, and hide his face from them at any time, he doth it to exercise their *faith*, to quicken their *diligence*, and to make them to set a *value* upon his Favours; and that when he does thus, as it were, say to them, *Seek ye my face*, they should readily reply with the Psalmist, *Thy face, Lord, will we seek*.

Now may a *gracious God* so hide *his face from our sins*, that he may never hide it from Us or from our Prayers; and may he so blot out all our *iniquities*, that our names may never be blotted out of the Book of Life, *Amen*.



## Of Presumptuous Sins.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* in the Lent-course,  
March 26. 1671.

Pfalm XIX. xiii.

*Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.*



*D*ivines tell us, there are *three Books* which God hath laid open to the Children of men, wherein he hath set forth such lively Characters and fair Discoveries and convincing Evidences of his Deity and Attributes, of his *Essence* and his *Will*, that no man, who makes use of his reason, can stand out in the denial of them. These *three* are the book of *Nature*, the book of *Scripture*, and the book of *Conscience*.

This *nineteenth Psalm* is a compleat Summary and Abstract of all these *three Volumes*.

I. Out of the *System of Creatures*, where there is not the meanest and most inconsiderable Production; not the least *hair* of our Head, it being out of our power to make one of them *white* or *black*, not the smallest spire of *grass* under our foot, it being beyond the wit of man to do the like; but abundantly evinceth the Almightyness of its great Creator: the *Psalmist* here is content to fetch *three* remarkable undeniable *Instances*, which fall under our daily observation.

1. The glorious Fabrick of the spangled *Vault* above us, *verse 1. The heavens declare the glory of God, &c.*

2. The Vicissitude of *Day* and *Night*, *verse 2. Day unto day uttereth speech, &c.* together with the extent of their Commission, that they preach to all Mankind in a language, which all Nations understand, *verse 3, 4. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard, &c.*

3. The Excellencies of that great Minister of Nature, the *Sun*; consider'd either

In the Comeliness and Beauty, and as I may say, of his Person; that he is as a *Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber*. Or,

In the Force of his incredible Swiftnes; *he rejoyceth as a Giant to run his race, verse 5.* Or,

In the Largeness of his Walk; *his going forth is from the end of Heaven, and his Circuit unto the ends of it.* Or lastly,

In the Universality of his Influence; that *there is nothing hid from the heat thereof, verse 6.*

The first Instance shews more especially the Power of God, in making such vast and glorious Bodies as the *Heavens* are.

The second proves his Wisdom, in ordering the Course of Time, and the Variety of Seasons. And

The third makes out his Goodness, in causing his Sun to rise on the just and the unjust, as it is argued, *Matth. 5. 35.*

II. The Bible or book of holy Writ he describes by its several Names or Titles, and its several Epithets, and its several Effects, in the *seventh, eighth, and ninth verses.*

Jer. 31. 33.

1. The Terms and Appellations he gives it are, that it is first a Law and a Testimony to teach us our duty: this, as he is a God in Covenant with us, it is a Law or legal Condition grounded upon a Testimony or Covenant; for that is the Tenour of the new Covenant, *I will put my Law in their heart.*

Then it is call'd the Statutes and the Commandment, to oblige our obedience as he is our Sovereign: the Statutes or positive Laws being grounded upon the Commandment or the Moral Law, the Law of Nature, the Law of our Creation.

Lastly, the Fear of the Lord and his Judgments; his Fear arising from the apprehension of his Judgments, to quicken our Diligence, in that our Lawgiver is to be our Judge also, according to that Law he hath given us to walk by.

2. The Qualities he ascribes to Scripture, are; that it is perfect and sure, a compleat and an infallible Rule of life.

It is right and pure, the readiest and the best way to holiness and true happiness.

And 'tis clean and true; clean as to the purging of the Affections; true as to the forming of the Conceptions and Opinions; furnishing both the Understanding with Truths, and the Will with Vertues and Graces.

In a word, it is suitable all over to the Principles and Appetites of a rational creature.

3. The Effects and Operations of it depend the former upon the latter, thus; it converts the soul, by making wise the simple; Conviction being pre-required as necessary to Conversion.

It rejoices the Heart, but first inlightens the eyes; the Irradiations of Light bringing along with them the blessed Assurances of Love.

It endures for ever, because it is righteous altogether; the future state of Rewards being to be determin'd by righteous Judgments to all Eternity.

This, as I said, in the seventh, eighth, and ninth verses.

Nor has he done yet, but pursues this Argument still with further Advantages, in the *tenth* and *eleventh verses*.

There are *two* things men do generally propose to themselves in all their Designs and Actions, *profit* and *pleasure*. Here they are both, and, which is rare, both together.

Are you for *Profit*, for Wealth and Riches? here you may have it. They are *more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold*.

Are you for *Pleasure*, for a voluptuous life? here you will be sure to meet with it, and not loose your Wealth neither: *sweeter also than honey, and the dropping of the honey comb, verse 10.*

Again, there are *two* ultimate Ends all humane Indeavours should be level'd at and imploy'd about, the serving of God and the saving of our selves; the ordering *this* life well, and the ascertaining the expectations of the *next*. Here you are provided for both.

Would you live well, as you ought to do, *here*? *By them*, says he, *is thy servant warned*. Take your warnings, take your directions hence.

Would you be happy *hereafter*? nay, would you be happy here first, and after this life happily ended, enjoy a blessed Eternity? *In keeping of them*, he tells you, *there is great Reward, verse 11.* there is great Reward at present even in this World, and will be infinitely greater in that which is to come.

III. After this survey of the *Works* and *Word* of God, he comes at last to peruse the third Book, his *Conscience*; a book, which, though wicked men may keep shut up, and naturally do not love to look into it, yet will one day be laid open before the great Tribunal in the view of the whole World, to the justifying of God, when he judges, and to impenitent sinners eternal confusion. Rev. 20.12.

And what finds he here? a foul blurr'd copy, that he is puzzled how to read: *Who*, says he, *can understand his errours*? Those Notions, which God had with his own hand imprinted upon Conscience in legible Characters, are partly defac'd and slur'd with the scribble, and interlinings of *secret faults*; partly obliterated and quite raz'd out with capital Crimes, *presumptuous sins*.

And yet this *Manuscript* cannot be so abused, but it will still give in Evidence for God; there being no argument in the World, can with more force extort an acknowledgment of God from any man's Conscience, then the conviction of guilt, it self labours under. For the sinner cannot but know he has transgress'd a *Law*, and he finds within him, if he be not past all sense, such apprehensions, that though at present he *walk in the ways of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes* (as the Wiseman ironically advises the young man to do, *Eccl. 11.9.*) yet he knows (as the same Wiseman there from his own Experience tells him) that *for all these things God will bring him into Judgment*.

The *Conscience* being thus convicted of sin, where there is any sense of true Piety, the Soul will, with *David* here, address it self to God for *Pardon*, that it may be *cleans'd from secret faults*; and for *Grace*, that by its restraints and preventions and assistances it may be *kept back from presumptuous sins*, and if unhappily engaged, that it may be freed at least from the Dominion of them. *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me, &c.*



We have in these words a *Request* and the *Ground* of it.

1. A *Request* or *Petition*; and that twofold.

The one; *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins*: and that is for *Grace* to restrain him from the bare single Commission of such sins.

The other; *Let them not have dominion over me*: and that's for *Grace* to rescue and deliver him from the rule and dominion of them.

2. The *Ground* and *Reason* of the *Petition*, from the advantage and benefit arising thence, that being sufficient argument to divine goodness to grant our *Requests*, the good of his *Servants*; and that likewise twofold;

First; *Then shall I be upright*, that is, perfect or sincere; Sincerity being the Evangelical Perfection. This in reference to his being kept from the Commission of presumptuous sins; the very Commission of any such sin being a shrew'd indication of Insincerity, and so inconsistent with the Gospel-state.

Next; *And I shall be innocent from the great transgression*: this as a Consequent of those sins not having dominion over him; since the continuance in the Practice of such sins, in an open defiance of Heaven, is such an accumulation of Guilt, and aggravation of Offences, that it puts a man actually into a damnable state, and makes his Condition, whilst he thus continues, utterly desperate.

I shall rather choose to treat of this Subject in a more popular familiar Method, so as may be most useful and convincing both for speaker and hearers; and to this end I shall

First, premise an ordinary, yet a necessary *Distinction* of *sin*, implied in the particle *also*. *Cleanse thou me from secret faults: Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins*.

Next, I shall set forth those Degrees of sinfulness, which bring up a sin to that height, that it may properly be called a *Presumptuous sin*.

Then I shall shew by what Practices and Artifices this sin acquires a *Dominion* over us.

And lastly, I shall lay down those Ways and Means, by which God, either by his *Providence* or his *Grace*, keeps back and restrains men from committing *presumptuous sins*, or from continuing under the dominion of them.

Having done this, as briefly as I may, I shall spend the rest of my time upon the Debate of *two Propositions*, which will in some sort comprise in them the whole Importance of my Text.

I. That the very Best of men, without Divine restraints, are liable to the worst of Miscarriages, even *presumptuous sins*; nay, not only to the bare Commission of them, but to the *Dominion* of them too.

This gather'd out of the *Request*, the former part of the Words; *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins*; intimating, that unless God keep him back, he may fall into them no less than others have done.

II. That *Presumptuous sins*, especially if continued in, are, even in the *Servants* of God themselves, offences of a very damnable nature and desperate Consequence; as overthrowing a man's uprightness, and drawing a deep and lasting guilt upon him, degrading him from his Station, and casting him out of God's favour; till by a thorough Repentance he shall recover and reconcile himself.

This

This taken out of the later part, the *Reason* of the Request, *Then shall I be upright, &c.* which implies that otherwise he would not be so.

I. First then for the *Distinction of sin*: we find here *secret Faults* and *presumptuous Miscarriages*; where by *secret faults* we are not to understand those sins, which are committed by men in their privacies and retirements, and do not lay them open to the eye and Censure of the World: For even the most *presumptuous sins* that are, may be and are often thus committed; there being hardly any man so extremely wicked, but that though he has no fear for God, yet he has that Civility, or at least shame for men, and that Regard to his Reputation, that by his good will he will conceal from them those things that may prove scandalous and reproachful to him.

And herein lies the difference betwixt *Hypocrisie* and *Profaneness*, that what the *one* presumes to do openly and professedly to God's great Dishonour and the Offence of good men; the *other* with no less Affront to God's Omniscience, though to avoid publick scandal, and to escape the Knowledge of men, is not afraid to practice in private.

But *secret faults* are such as hide themselves, הַסְתָּרוֹת, the common Errors and Frailties of our life, sins of daily Incurſion, of which we are all guilty, and of which, thousands of them in our life time, we our selves take no particular notice; for *who understands his errors?* and he only knows how oft we offend, who has numbred the hairs of our heads.

*These* all may of course, by a daily Repentance, be taken off the file, and raz'd out of the Records of our lives: For he that has commanded us to pardon one another, though it be *seventy times seven*, upon a Submission after wrong done, will not be scanty in his own Pardons to us of those Offences and Injuries, which were not deliberately and maliciously design'd against him.

*These* are more especially those *Trespases* and *Debts*, we every day run on score, and are taught by our Saviour in his Form of *Prayer* to ask Forgiveness of, *as we forgive them that trespass against us.*

Of this sort are, *first*, sins of *Infirmity*, which with all the care that can be used, cannot always be prevented, and which will mix themselves even with our best Performances; as wandering thoughts at our Prayers, and the like.

*Then* sins of our *Constitution* and *Temper*, which have their rise from the Nature of our Body, more then from the Election of our Will; such as are upon slight Provocation, Anger in those that are *Cholerick*; Sloth in the dull *Phlegmatick*; Excess of mirth and Love of pleasure in those of a *Sanguin* Complexion; and in *Melancholy* dispositions Miscarriages more then a good many, through an irksome unevenness of Temper.

*Again*, sins of *Surprize* and sudden *Surreption*; when we are overtaken before we are aware, and had not time to consider; and our Will had a kind of Rape committed upon it by the Tempter.

For though, as rational Creatures, we may be supposed to act all we do, and to speak all we say, *Scientes & Volentes*, wittingly and willingly; yet it often so happens, that the most Considerate may do and say that in haste, which afterwards they could heartily wish were undone and unsaid, and which if they were to do again, they would not do.

So that those trips of the *Tongue* and stumbles of the *Foot* in our ordinary Conversation, I say, all rash *Words* and unadvised *Actions*, which come from us, are not constantly to be charged upon the *Will*; our immediate sorrow for our so doing or saying, and our wishing straight, we had not done or said them, being a fair argument they had not our full Consent.

In the *last* place (not to mention all of this kind) sins of *Ignorance*; when a man does not know his Duty, nor has sufficient Means to come to the Knowledge of it; for that is it which makes it *pure Ignorance*; otherwise in those, that wilfully neglect the means of Knowledge, it is *groß affected* malicious *Ignorance*, and is so far from excusing them, that it renders them highly guilty.

Now all these sins, whether of *Weakness* and human *Frailty*; whether of natural *Temper* and *Inclination*; whether of *Surprise* and *Oversight*; or lastly of *simple* and unaffected *Ignorance*, are such sins as do not amount to that high aggravation, such as God himself will not look upon with so severe an eye, as those that are presumptuously committed, whereto the *Understanding* and *Will* both are freely and fully consenting.

And it is the Opinion of *Casuits*, that for these *secret faults* an habitual Repentance, and a general Confession of them in *groß*, without a particular Enumeration of them by *retail*, may serve the turn, and through God's Mercy find acceptance: whereas for *wilful Transgressions*, that are sins of a deeper Tincture and a more direful Consequence, as having Damnation writ in Text-letters upon their forehead, there must be a strict solemn course entred into, a severe Discipline kept on foot, and explicit acts of a particular Repentance made out, e're their pardon can be obtained, as sins that are not consistent with a state of Grace.

However let me leave this with some *Caution* too, that for those smaller sins we will not make *Weakness* and *Ignorance*, *Temper* and *Surprise*, bare pretences for our Miscarriages, when perhaps our Wills and Judgments are engaged, and we through our own faults have made Temptations of these kinds so familiar to us, and so far from being resisted, that upon all occasions we readily yield to them at every Summons.

Hebr. 12. 1.

But we ought to watch and strive against these sins that do so easily beset us; and know that if they get our consent, they are no longer sins of *Weakness* and *Surprise*, &c. but wilful deliberate sins of *Presumption*; and that many of these lesser leaks will, if not look't after in time, sink our Hopes, as well as those great ones, that lay our Souls abroad, and pour in a whole Sea of lust upon us; and that these sins, though they be in their nature of a less dangerous alloy, and may be bought off with a more easie Repentance, as having not that natural Venom and high degree of Wickedness in them, which *presumptuous sins* have; yet, if they be continued and liv'd in with the approbation of a constant Practice, may through our Impenitence betray us to everlasting ruins.

*Another caveat* is, that in passing Judgment upon our Actions we do not flatter our selves, by giving our *groß* heinous sins these gentle names. As for Instance, *Blasphemy*, *Sodomy*, *Perjury*, *Murder*, *Adultery*, and the like, are not to be termed in any man Infirmities or Surprises of passion; as being in their nature deliberate acts, and let them be committed never so wealdy, never so hastily, are *presumptuous sins*, as flowing from a corrupt mind, and a vicious habit of Wickedness, to which never any man



man arrives without his own deliberate Consent; and this *Deliberation* and *Consent* it is that makes any sin a *Presumptuous sin*.

Thus having distinguished *presumptuous sins* from others of a lesser and a lower sort and kind (wherein we have been the larger, that People may know how to pass Judgment upon their state, when they call themselves to account) we come now to shew, by what *degrees* and *steps* sins are advanced to that height, as to deserve the name of wilful deliberate *Presumptuous sins*; which is our *second* Undertaking.

II.

And of this S. James has set down the Method exactly, *Chap. i. vers. 14, 15. Every man is tempted*, says he, *that is, falls into any sin, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and inticed: Then when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is fulfilled, bringeth forth death.*

Where you may take notice of these several *steps*.

1. The Invitation of the *sensual Appetite*; when the Faculties of the lower Soul, the *Senses* and *Affections*, are inticed and won over to the Enemy by the proposal of carnal Baits or worldly Advantages: as in the first Temptation the forbidden fruit was fair to look on, and desirable for Knowledge. Gen. 3.6.

2. The Inclination of the *Will*; when the sensitive part draws aside and intices the superiour Faculty of the Will to go along with it, and weighs it down from its indifference to a determinate choice of an apparent, though no real, good. And by these two is meant a mans being *drawn away of his own Lust and inticed.*

3. A force upon *Judgment*: for generally the *Will* is first ingaged, and then by her Authority she engages the *Judgment* and over-rules the understanding part in despite of the Principles of Reason, and the common Notions of good and bad, and the Suggestions of Conscience, and the dictates of God's Spirit, and the Rules of his holy Word; commanding it to shuffle off all those Convictions, and to resolve upon the thing proposed however, whatever come on't.

And when it has so done, then there follows

4. A full *Consent*: and thus *Lust conceives* betwixt a depraved masterful *Will*, and a baffled cow'd *Understanding*.

From *Consent* it proceeds to birth, and that is, when it is produced into *Act*: That is the *fifth* step.

5. The *sinful Act* it self: and now Lust is come to perfection, now *lust hath brought forth sin.*

This is that we most properly call *deliberate presumptuous sin*;

Which yet is still further capable of being aggravated and improved into higher degrees of hellish *Presumption*; when, which is the *next* thing we are to speak to, this daring sin gets the *Dominion* and Power over a man, and that much what according to this Method.

III.

First from *act* it proceeds to *delectation*, rolling the sweet Morsel under the tongue, and reflecting upon the fancied unlawful Pleasures of that transient *Act*; from *Delight* it passes on to *Repetition of acts* and new reiterated Trials; thence it boldly challenges *Toleration* and *Indulgence*, and grows up to a sturdy *Habit*, and a kind of unalterable *Custom* of doing ill; when it is become natural to a man, and necessary to his very being, that he cannot live nor enjoy himself without it; till at last in wicked men it arrive to a downright obstinate resolv'd *Impenitence*; and then *sin*, when it is thus *finished* and compleated, *bringeth forth*

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Death,

*Death*, is come to its full Period to seal up the sinner to Damnation, and lodges him upon the brink of Hell, engaging his soul to everlasting Death.

So that when *sin* hath by these degrees advanced a Conquest in any child of God; when *Lust* or *Passion* has inticed his *Appetite*, and gain'd upon his *Will*, and gagg'd his *Understanding*, and gotten *Consent*, and to the great affront of God's Word and Spirit, and the no less wound of Conscience, broke forth into *Act*; then this issue proves a *presumptuous sin*.

Rom. 7. 13.

And when *sin* grows up from *act* to *delight*, from *delight* to *new acts*, from Repetition of sinful Acts to vitious *Indulgence*, to *Habit* and *Custom*, and a second *Nature*; so that any thing that toucheth upon it, is grievous and strikes to the man's Heart; when it is got into God's place, and requires to be loved *with the whole strength*, makes Grace strike fail, and other vices to do it Homage, demands all his Concerns to be sacrificed to it, and to be serv'd with his Reputation, his Fortunes, his Parts, his Body and Soul, to the irreparable loss of his Time and Eternity both: this is the height of its *Dominion*, then *sin* becomes *exceeding sinful*, and must needs make strange and sad alterations in the State of *Saints* themselves, and be great Hindrances to them in their way to Heaven, having brought them so near to Hell.

But then for the *last step*, which only the Reprobates and damned ones tread, or (which is all one) those that do tread are Reprobate and damned; that of *Obduration* and *final Impenitence*: that makes up the Measure of *sin* to the height and depth, and gives it its full Completion; there being nothing further behind but a dreadful expectation of Judgment.

Again, not only so, but *sin* has also its several *Aggravations* through all these *Stages* of its Progress: as the *Proposal* at first was more or less considerable, according to the temptingness of the Object; as the *Will* was more or less prevail'd upon by the Passions; as the force upon Judgment was greater or less, according to the quality and number of contrary Reasons afforded from the convictions of Conscience and the assistances of Grace; as the *Consent* was more or less easily and fully obtain'd; according to the nature and the Circumstances of the *Act* it self: And lastly (not to go over all) according to the *Means*, a man had, of resisting or avoiding the Temptation at first and ever since, and according to the many or fewer *Motives*, after his Ingagement in the *sin*, of making his retreat by Repentance.

All which do very much diversifie the Case in this kind of *sins*, as they are variously applicable to several Persons.

Having thus laid down what it is makes up a *Presumptuous sin*, what it is that instates it in its *Dominion*; we are in the *last* place briefly to shew those *Ways* and *Means*, which God uses either to restrain and *keep back* men from the Commission of *Presumptuous sins*, or to rescue them and recover them from under the *Dominion* of them.

And those are partly upon the account of *Providence*, partly from common *Morality*, and partly from special *Grace*.

*First,*

First, God many times by his *Providence* hinders men from acting their wicked Resolutions and effecting their impious Designs; and that several ways; such as these, to reckon up but some of them:

*By denying them the opportunity.* We say it is *Occision* makes the Thief; and certainly the want of it makes many a one, I cannot say honest and vertuous, but less wicked then otherwise he would be. And as it is the Master-piece of *Christian Policy*, in the truly pious, studiously to avoid all occasions of evil; so it is not the least kindness of *Divine providence*, to disappoint us of such occasions, which we of our selves are too ready to seek, too forward to embrace. Thus *Esaú's* vow'd Revenge found no vent, and the malice of the *Pharisees* and *Elders* against Christ was ineffectual, till his hour was come.

Again, *by defeating their Power and disabling them from Mischief*; which was *Abimeleck's* case: and yet must not be applied to such Wretches, as have by their violent and frequent Prosecutions of their Lusts made themselves *Emerrit* to the service of them, and owe the forbearance of their *Vices* to those *Weaknesses* and *Diseases* which are the common Attendants of *Intemperance* and *Incontinence*.

Further, *by taking from them the heat and inclination to evil*: Thus *Kings* and *Priests* have been secur'd in their sacred Functions from the fury of the Rabble, and the violence of an enraged Multitude by him that stills the raging of the Sea and the madness of the People. *Touch not mine Anointed*, saith he, *and do my Prophets no harm*. Thus *Esaú*, at his meeting with his Brother, relented into Civility, and fell upon him indeed, but only with the gentler design of kissing him. Psal. 105. 15.  
Gen. 33. 14.

Particularly *by some extraordinary and unexpected Accident*, that has come in the way and crost evil Purposes. *Sennacherib's* rebellious sons secured the *holy City* from his further attempts, and the troubles of *Ashyria* prov'd at that time the preservation of *Jerusalem*. There is no good man but may observe in some one or other Instance of his life, that *Balaam's* story has been verified in himself; when God has sent his Angel to countermand him, as he has been going of an ill Errand; I mean, engaging in some untoward unjustifiable Design.

And these are the usual *Methods* God takes to put by the *Commission* of intended evil.

I shall name but one more; whereby he fetches men from under the *Dominion* of their sins: and that is *Affliction* and *worldly Trouble*; according to that sacred Proverb, *Vexatio dat intellectum*: for *Affliction*, as it is apt (what another Proverb tells us) to make a Wiseman mad, so it is no less efficacious to bring Fools to their wits again. By this means King *Manasseh* was recovered, when the irons enter'd into his soul, and his Captivity prov'd his Ransom from the slavery of his sins.

And these are *providential Restraints*.

The next are out of meer *Morality*, when a man out of a generous Resentment of the *Turpitude* and *Vileness* of any sin, abhors and detests it. This sense *Hazael* had at first; *Am I dog, that I should do thus and thus?* And the Vertues of the *Heathen-Heroes* were much of this rate and size: Or when a man from external Respects of *Interest*, *Health*, *Credit*, and the like, takes to good courses, and is deterred by *Disadvantages*, *Diseases* and *Disgraces* from a pursuance of his Lusts. And it may rationally be guest, at that rate we generally live, that where there is one rejects his sin out of the sincere love of Vertue, there's twenty that do it out of love of themselves, or for By-respects. And 1.  
2.  
2 Kings 2. 13.



it is well, as the World goes, if any Argument may prevail with us.

3. In the *last* place God's *gracious Restraints*, which are the surest and kindest Obligations from sin, when the *Heart is established and garrison'd with Grace*; (so *S. Paul* expresses it) the Conscience kept awake in a quick sense of Duty, and the man aw'd with God's fear, and terrified with the deformity of sin, and the Danger of the Temptation that leads to it. These Considerations were the preservatives of *Joseph's* beleaguerr'd Chastity; *How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*

Gen. 39. 9.

We have dispatch'd the *four Particulars* we first propos'd.

*The Distinction of sin.*

*The Nature of Presumptuous sin.*

*The Dominion of it; and*

*The Restraints of it.*

We are now to speak somewhat, wherein we can be but brief, of the *two Observations* we drew from the words.

I. The *first* of which is this; *That the Best of men, the most eminent Saints themselves may fall, and have fall'n under the guilt, and lain under the power of Presumptuous sins.*

That they *may*, appears from this, that they are still Partakers of the same common *nature* with other men. They have the same *Affections* and *Passions*, the same *fleshly Appetite*; which many times betrays them to the like Inconveniences. And sometimes *Lust* gets so high, that it tops their *Graces*, and overflows all mounds and banks, with which *Reason* and *Conscience* have design'd to fence it in. They have still even after their Regeneracy, reliques of the old *Adam* left in them, the dregs of a *corrupt Nature* and *original Concupiscence*, which upon a high Temptation, or upon God's desertion, breaks out and bears down all before it.

Rom. 7. 24.

Thus we find the great *Apostle* bemoaning himself, *Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* And *David* here in this Book of Meditations often roaring for the very Disquietness of his Heart; and labouring under the Apprehension of his Miscarriages.

Indeed we shall not need any other *Instance* for this business, then Him; whether in the matter of *Uriah*, which has laid a blot upon his Memory, or in that other Miscarriage of numbring the People; the one from his *Lust*, the other from his *Pride*; the one a sin more against *Light*, a presumptuous Violation of plain Duty; the other more against *Love*, by forgetting and quitting his dependances upon God, and trusting to an arm of *Flesh*.

Thus by *David's* one Example it sufficiently appears, that the greatest Saints are not priviledg'd from the greatest Falls by *presumptuous sins* and wilful Transgressions; whose Stories have been faithfully recorded in Scripture, and there set as *Sea-Marks* and Warnings to others that are to come after, and by no means to invite or excuse our Imitation.

For that *some* presume by these great *Examples of frailty* to encourage themselves in their avow'd wickedness, they are found tardy in a double wilful Mistake.

1. They must know, that there is a great deal of Difference betwixt the surprize of *human Infirmity*, as it was with *Noah, Lot, Peter, &c.* and the design of a *resolute Impiety*; betwixt a *slip* and a constant *Practise*; falling into the mire, and wallowing in it.

And therefore it is unreasonable in them, that live in known sin, and make it their Custom to do ill, to pretend the Examples of those, who once in their lives to their great grief did so, and to think to excuse their own Profaneness by good mens weakness.

2. Since they are so ready to imitate Good men, as they pretend, in their *Falls* and *Miscarriages*; they are to be put in Mind, that it would be much better for them to imitate them in their *Repentance*.

For they make a quite contrary use of such *Examples*, then what Scripture intended; these Passages being set down in holy Writ for our Admonition; that since such *Worthies* in Religion have had their Falls, we should be humble in the sense of our own Infirmity, and place our Confidence in the Assistances of Divine Grace, for fear our *Presumption* make us miscarry.

And then further, that seeing their *Repentance* was no less Exemplary, then their *sin*, that if any of us should fall as they did, we might, as they d.d also, recover our selves again by a timely and serious Repentance.

And *both* these Considerations are enough to deterr any one from running wilfully into such sins, as have been even to godly men of so dangerous a Consequence, and of so difficult and troublesom a Cure. For that is the *other Observation* remains to be spoken of.

II. That *Presumptuous sins, even in the Servants of God themselves, are Offences of a damnable and desperate nature*, that tincture them with a deep Guilt, subvert their spiritual State, and throw them out of God's Favour into Disgrace, till by a thorough Repentance, which costs them many a bitter Pang and Throw, they recover and reconcile themselves.

The *Reasons*, by which this *Proposition* may be prov'd, are such, as partly shew the *Justice* of the thing, *why* it should be so; and partly the *Manner* of it, *how* it is so.

1. *First*, I say, 'tis *just* it should be so, that pious men, when they commit deliberate sins against God, and the power of his Grace, should find it very difficult for them to be reconcil'd to God's Favour, and to recover themselves into that state of Grace again they were placed in before; and that from *two* arguments.

1. *For their Ingratitude to God.*

2. *For the great hurt of their Example*; in General, as it is a scandal to Religion; in Particular, as it proves 1. *The hardning of Wicked men* in their way. 2. *The discouragement of the Pious* in theirs.

1. It is very just with God severely to chastise such Affronts done to his Grace by *Presumptuous sins*, to make his own Childrens disobedience and *Ingratitude* to him cost them dear, and the higher they have been formerly in his Favour, to cast them down so much the lower; that by the due sense of their own Unworthiness they may be brought to a right Valuation of his Gifts and Graces, which they so wantonly abus'd, and whereof now they must learn the Worth by the sad Experience of wanting them.

The greater obligations of *Love* and Kindness there are betwixt God and any Soul, the deeper is his Resentment of her false dealing and ungrateful Carriage.

That *Heathens* or Wicked men, who have no Communion with God, should run into great sins, there is no such wonder; they do after their kind, and what might be expected from them: so that God many times, unless they be very Crying sins, and an universal Corruption, overlooks them, and takes no notice of them here, leaving them to the last Reckoning of the great Day.

But when such an one as *David*, whom he has signaliz'd with his Favours and his Graces, whom he has own'd with special Remarks of an extraordinary Affection, and entertain'd with the Intimacies of his Love; when such an one as he shall presumptuously lift up his Heel against him; when a Child of his own bringing up shall prove Rebellious, when the man after God's own Heart shall deliberately and wilfully do things contrary to his Will; how near must this needs go to the Heart of God? and what less can he do in *Justice*, then bring that Discomfort and Disappointment, they have offered him, home upon themselves? and set their Reconciliation at such hard terms, that the regaining of his lost Favour shall be a very dear Purchase?

I should now proceed to the *other Argument* of God's Justice in thus handling them, taken from the *Mischief* their Example does, both in general, by bringing a great *Scandal* upon Religion; and more particularly by *incouraging* wicked loose people, and by *discouraging* the truly Pious, and giving them occasion of grief and slackning their Zeal.

And then go forward to the other reasons which are to shew the *Manner*, how our Spiritual State is impair'd by such wilful deliberate Transgressions; and that first *naturally* by a Violation of the Principle and the Decay of Parts, and by wounding and wasting the Conscience; and then *Judicially*, by God's desertion of us upon our Rejection and ill Usage of his Grace, and that both as to *Light* and as to *Love*; I say, as to the Convictions of supernatural Light, and as to the Obligations of divine Love.

But this, you may perceive, would be too large a Field to travel over in these Straights of time.

I shall only crave your Patience to conclude with a short serious *Exhortation* to you and to my self;

That we would all of us set a constant Guard upon our sins of *Infirmity*; that where *Sin* is apt to abound, *Grace* may much more abound;

That we would watch our own *Tempers*, and strive against the vitious Propensions of our nature;

That in those things, where we have formerly been at any time *surpris'd*, we would take time henceforward to consider, and not be taken at Unawares;

That wherein we are *ignorant*, we would use all fair Means of informing our selves; and in the mean while make good use of that Knowledge we have;

That we would especially beg the Assistance of God's *Grace*, to strengthen our *Weakness*, to restrain our *Inclinations*, to prevent *Surprises*, to enlighten our *Paths*, to help our *Performances*, and to pardon our *Failings*;

And that we would constantly call our selves to *account* betwixt God and



and our own Souls, to recollect the Errors of our Life, and set our Reconings strait, to the great Comfort of our Hearts, the Confirmation of our Graces, and the blessing of our Callings, and the good Success of all that we take in hand.

Above all, that, seeing the extream Danger of those sins, which are committed deliberately and *presumptuously*, with a high hand, against God; and how difficult a thing it is to be reconcil'd to him, and to come into his Favour again after such malicious Provocations; and that the *Best* of men, the dearest of God's Children, have not been freed from falling into such desperate Miscarriages, to the high *Displeasure* of God, and the *Scandal* of Religion, to the *Forfeiture of Grace* and the *Trouble of Conscience*, and to the withdrawing of his *Light* and *Love* from them; We would set his Fear before us, and stand in awe, and take heed of *Presumptuous sins*:

And if any of us have at any time by such wilful Offences made God our Enemy; that we would make haste to reconcile our selves now whilst we are in the way with him, by judging our selves, that we may not be judg'd; and by a serious and speedy Repentance sue out our Pardon, through the Merits and Mediation of his Welbeloved, our Advocate.

*To whom, with the Father and holy Spirit, be all Honour and Glory. Amen.*

*Of the Design of Christ's coming into the  
World.*

A Sermon Preached at S. Martins in the Fields,  
Sept. 1. 1672. being a Communion-day.

1 Tim. I. xv.

*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all accep-  
tation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to  
save sinners; of whom I am chief.*



THE *Apostle*, having upon occasion, in the foregoing *verse*, with humble Thankfulness acknowledg'd Gods special Favour to him in his own Conversion, who had been before, whilst he was a *Jew*, a blasphemer of Christ, a persecutor of the Church, and in all his carriage highly and desperately injurious to the name and profession of Christianity; out of a readiness to impart that Mercy and Favour, which he himself had obtain'd at God's hands, to all other sinners whatsoever, of whatever kind, of whatever degree, he doth, from that *personal Instance* of his own, draw forth and set down a *general Conclusion*, wherein is briefly compriz'd the whole design of the Gospel, to the comfort and encouragement of all sinners.

*The grace of our Lord* (as it is in the fourteenth verse) *has been exceeding abundant towards me, through faith and love which is in Christ Jesus*; and therefore all sinners may entertain the same hopes, that they too assuredly, through the same faith and love, may obtain Mercy, and be saved as well as I. *This is a faithful saying, &c.*

*A faithful saying.*] A thing of undoubted truth, a Doctrine of infallible certainty, as sure as the Gospel, as true as Truth it self; this being the great Article of Christian Faith, *viz.* the Humanity of the Son of God, who is the *Amen*, himself the Way and the Truth and the Life.

*And worthy.*] Nor is it only *faithful* and true, but a *worthy* and excellent saying also; a truth of great Weight and Consequence; as precious and valuable a Doctrine as ever was deliver'd from Heaven to the sons of men: and therefore *worthy*

Rev. 1. 18.  
John 14. 6.

Of

*Of our acceptance.*] Fit to be received with all respect, and reverence, and our most serious regards; deserving to be entertain'd with the highest Credit and the most exact Belief; as being of greater Importance, as well as Verity, then any of the *Jewish Traditions*, all the Doctrines of their *Cabbala* ever were; to which the Apostle here alludes, and which they look upon with so much Veneration.

Nor is this a thing offer'd only to the *learned* and the *wise*, to the *pious* and the *virtuous*, so as to exclude the *ignorant* and the *wicked*, the *meaner* and the *viler* sort of Mankind; but is imparted and made known, 'tis propos'd and tender'd to all, to *sinners* especially, and therefore to all; inasmuch as all are concluded under sin. Whereupon it is said to be *worthy* Gal. 3.22.

*Of all acceptance.*] Of an universal acceptance, *πανος αποδοχης*, as being of an universal Concern and influence; or else the Apostle's *Inference*, from his own *particular* to a *general*, had been frigid and almost insignificant; if all were not capable of that Benefit, which *S. Paul* tells us, he had met with; capable, I say, through the same Means, by which he obtain'd it, to wit, *through faith and love in Christ Jesus*.

And now, after this glorious and dazling *Proem*, I need not beg your most earnest Attention to the *saying* it self, which has so much of *true*, so much of *worthy*, so much of *acceptable* in it self; and lastly, so much of *general Importance* to us all.

Surely this must be the strange discovery of some stupendous *Mystery*, the Apostle ushers in with this solemnity of *preface*. It is so; a great Mystery, but such as I cannot deliver in plainer terms then the Apostle here does himself. 'Tis, *that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*.

*Christ.*] The *Anointed* of God by Commission from his Father.

*Jesus.*] The *Saviour* of Men, out of the design of his own love.

The Lord's *Christ* and our *Jesus*; the *Son of God* by eternal Generation, made the *Son of man* by Incarnation.

*Christ* first, sent by the Father, that when he came, he might be unto is a *Jesus*: for he

*Came into the World,*] Ingaged, as our Surety, to assume our Nature, hat he might redeem it; and in the fulness of time became *Man*, in every thing like us, sin only excepted; which, that we might be like him, he took away from us, and took it upon himself. Hebr. 4.15.

In short, he was born, lived and died, and rose again, and ascended on high, and all for the Salvation of men; so that he both came *into the World*, and went *out of the World*, on this only purpose, and out of this neer design.

*To save sinners.*] To *save* them, that is, to bring them into a salvable Condition, that now they may be sav'd.

He *purchas'd* salvation for them by making a full Satisfaction for their sins with the Price of his Blood; he has *proffer'd* them salvation in his *Word* and *Sacraments*; and has *furnished* them with all necessary *Means* for the attaining of it, if they will but *accept* of it, and not through their impenitence and unbelief render themselves incapable of so great a Blessing, and so reverse and cancel all that *Christ* has done and suffer'd for them; who *came to save*



*Sinners*] Indeed; but so as to destroy *sin*; To save them from their sins, not to save them in their sins, together with their sins. So we have this saying explain'd out of our Saviour's own mouth, *Matt. 9. 13. Mark 2. 17. I came, says he, to call sinners to Repentance.* That is his way of *saving* us, by *calling* us to *Repentance*.

Where this Doctrine, that is so *worthy of all acceptation*, meets with hearty Acceptance and suitable Intertainment, there it has its kindly and gracious effect.

Thus *S. Paul* found it, who, as he first brought in this *general* from a *particular*, from his own obtaining Mercy, that *Christ came to save sinners* indefinitely in *general*; so here he turns the Argument back again; from an *universal Proposition* drawing a *particular Conclusion*; that *Christ came to save sinners*, therefore to save *him*.

The whole *Argument* stands in this posture. I, that was a blasphemer and a persecutor, found favour at God's hands through *Christ*, and so may all; for *Christ came to save sinners*.

Again, if *Christ came* with design to *save sinners*; then I that have been so notorious a sinner, that I may well reckon my self the *Chief* of them, was not to be denied my share in the Benefit of his coming.

By this means *S. Paul* sets himself at both ends of the *Argument*, who from his own Example inferring *Christ's* purpose at large of saving *sinners*, resolves in the close not to be left out of that number, but makes himself the *Chief*.

*Of whom I am chief.*] And this by way of *Instance*; whereby, as he backs and proves the *general* Assertion of *Christ's* coming to *save sinners*, so he encourages and instructs all sinners whatsoever for the attainment of this *common Salvation*; and so he himself applies it in the next verse to the *Text*, where he tells us, that *for this cause he obtain'd mercy, that in him first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering for a pattern, εἰς ὑπομιμνήσκον, ad informationem*, says the Vulgar Interpreter; for Information and Instruction to them that should hereafter believe on him to Life everlasting.

Jude 3.

This *Explication* being premis'd, as a ground of all our following Discourse; we come next to the *Division* of the Words: wherein we have two Parts mainly observable.

1. A mysterious and comfortable *Doctrine*; that *Christ came to save sinners*, of which number *S. Paul* acknowledges himself to be one; and to be sure; accounts himself to be the *chief*, one at least of the Principal.

2. A solemn *Introduction* and serious Recommendation of this *Doctrine*; that it is a *faithful true saying*, fit to be believed, and worthy to be accepted and entertained by all men; *worthy of all acceptation*.

The *Doctrine* is,

1. Propos'd in general terms; *Christ came to save sinners*.
2. Exemplified in particular; in *S. Paul's* own case.

The *Recommendation* of it is

1. From its *Truth* and certainty; 'tis *πιστὸς λόγος*, a credible saying.
2. From its *Worth* and value; 'tis a *worthy saying*.

3. From

3. From its *Concern* and importance; fit to be accepted: 'tis *worthy of acceptance*.

4. From its *Universal Influence*; 'tis worthy of *all acceptance*; or as it is in the Office, *to be received of all men*.

We begin with the *Recommendation*, as set by way of *Preface*: *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance*. Here is

1. *Truth* and certainty. All *Truth* is desirable. The *Philosopher* tells <sup>Arifi.</sup> us, that all men do naturally desire to know; nor is *light* more pleasing to the *Eye*, then *truth* to the *Understanding*.

*Blindness* is an uncomfortable state, to be shut up in the dark; and no less uncomfortable is it to live in *Ignorance* and *Errour*.

The meanest *Truths* are precious; since it is God's great Property to be the *God of truth*, and of his children to be the *children of truth*.

*Natural Truths* have busied the ancient *Philosophers*, the *Wisemen* of the learnedst Nations, and made them famous in their Ages; though, when all was done, their studies and speculations proved rather *Exercises of Wit* then *Discoveries of Truth*; insomuch that *Pyrrho* set up a *Sect* of the *Scepticks*, that baffled all the rest, doubted of every thing, and taught that nothing could be certainly known; and their *indifference* and the *ignorance* of others was the more pardonable; because, as the *Psalmist* informs us, *God's ways*, even in the tracks and methods of *Nature*, are past finding out.

Again, *Moral truths* are of a higher esteem, as more perfective of human Nature. *Socrates* hence was judg'd by the Oracle the wisest man, for bringing in this kind of *Philosophy*.

But then *Spiritual Truths* are higher still, far transcending all those of *Nature* and *Morality*, as being of *supernatural Revelation*.

And of all these *supernatural Truths*, *Christ* is the highest. *Without all Controversie great is the Mystery of Godliness*; *God was manifest in the flesh*: The *Mystery* would not be great if it were not *without Controversie*. 1 Tim. 3. 16.

*Quantum profuit nobis hæc Fabula de Christo?* the story of *Christ*, the *Romance* of the Gospel, was spoken like a *Pope*; the merry *Pope* they call'd him, but one may call him the *impious Pope*. Whatever Profit it might be to him, it would be no profit to *Christians* if it were only so. What *Paul* says of the *Resurrection*, one particular of *Christ's coming*, we may say of all; if there were no such thing, *then were we Christians of all men most miserable*. 1 Cor. 15. 19.

This is a *true saying* then, if *God's word* be true.

2. It is a *worthy saying*; there is *worth* and value in it. It is an excellent and valuable truth; no trifle or ordinary story. For there are *degrees of Truth*; some are more considerable then others.

This is such an one; in its *Subject*, *Christ*, the *Son* of *God* incarnate: in its *Manifestation*, by *Prophets*, *Apostles*, &c. by *God the Father*, and by *Christ* in person: in its *End* and purport; to restore the *Nature* of man beyond its primitive *Perfection*, and to make men partakers of the *Divine nature*.

*Little minute things* are slightly past over without any *Consideration*; an abuse put upon *Socrates* by the *Greek Comedian*; that he measured the leaps of fleas.

Further, things of *ordinary* occurrence are taken small notice of, and are below a wise man's care.

And then *quæ sciuntur ut sciuntur*, those things which make men more *knowing* only, and not the *better*, that tend to no real Advantage, are generally neglected with a *Cui bono*, To what purpose?

John 17. 3. But there are all manner of Excellencies in this Truth; *God in our flesh* is the sum of Evangelical mysteries. This is *saving knowledge* to know God and his Christ.

This is *that Truth* which was promised in Paradise immediately upon the Fall; *that truth*, which was shadow'd under the Types and Ceremonies of the *Jewish* service; *that truth*, which with all its circumstances was plainly foretold by the Prophets under the *Old Testament*; *that truth*, which was at last fully compleated in the History of the *New*: in a word, *that truth*, upon which our Religion and holy Faith stands bottom'd; that, which alone gives to God the honour of his *Attributes*, and to men the hope of *Salvation*; so that it must needs be *worth the acceptance*. That is the *third*.

3. It is a truth of the highest *Concern* and Importance. Were it never so *true*, never so *valuable* in it self, if it were not *beneficial* to us, none would think it worth inquiry: 'Tis *Interest* sets mens Wits (as well as Hands) at work.

On the other hand, be a thing never so inconsiderable in it self, if the Ballance incline this way, to *Advantage*; men are very curious and careful in their re-searches.

Rocks of *Diamonds*, and Beds of *Pearl*, if there are such things in the *Indies*; what are they to us? we are not concern'd.

Now herein lies our true *Interest*. This truth is worth as much as the World is worth, and we are every one so far concern'd, that we are lost without it.

Nor doth it *deserve* only our acceptance, if we will be *Wise*; but *requires* it too, if we mean to be *Happy*. Our eternal happiness is engaged in its acceptation. If we let it go, if we slip the Opportunity of taking it, whilst proffer'd, we are for ever miserable.

Nor can any man excuse his oversight; that it was not meant to him. It hath

4. An *Universal Influence* upon all. It is *to be received of all men*; if all men are sinners, as they are.

If thou art *no sinner* indeed, thou maist fancy thy self to be well enough without it, thou need'st no Saviour; but who can, who dare say so? If thou be a *sinner*, why dost thou stand off? why dost thou not accept of *Salvation*?

If a *Ship*, if a *State* be indanger'd, every particular man is concern'd: so 'tis here; we are all *in eadem navi*. In the *first Adam* all lost; by the *second* all to be recovered, but those who wilfully perish.

In a *Plague* suppose there were a *Catholicon*, a Soverain Cure, to be had by all; yet those certainly perish, who neglect to apply it. One may starve in the midst of plenty.

This neglect of thine, *obstinate sinner*, is no Reproach to thy *Saviour's* intention, nor Argument to undervalue his *Love* or his *Merit*; but a foul Aggravation of thy own desperate folly, who would'st resolutely make away with thy self, when thou hadst means enough offer'd thee for thy *Salvation*.

Quoties



*Quoties volui & noluiſtis?* How oft would I, and ye would not? will be Mat. 23. 27 ſaid to all ſuch wretched ſinners.

The *Angels* intended to ſave *Lots* whole Family, but the ſons in law mocked, and were deſtroy'd with the men of *Sodom*: and ſo will ſuch careleſs Chriſtians, for all Chriſt, periſh together with the infidel World; and yet Chriſt's Love ne're a whit the leſs, but their Condemnation the greater and the juſter.

To apply; Is it a *Truth*? Then embrace it with a ready and a ſteddy Faith.

Is it of ſuch *Worth*? Admire it, and think it worthy thy moſt ſerious ſtudy, and do not ſet light by it.

Is it ſo *important*? Mind it carefully, and with all diligence labour after it.

Is it of ſo near and *particular Concern* to thee? Do not fool away thy Advantages, becauſe thou ſeeſt others do ſo.

To direct thy *Faith* and order thy *Inquiries* and *Indeavours*, come along with me, and take notice how *Chriſt came* into the World to ſave ſinners. That is the *Doctrine* it ſelf.

The *Doctrine*, I ſaid, was *myſterious* and *Comfortable*; *Myſterious* in the Manner and Method of it; *Comfortable* in the Deſign and Conſequence.

1. *Myſterious*; ſo that the *Angels* themſelves, (as *S. Peter* tells us) de- 1 Pet. 1. 12, fire *μεγαλυνει*, to pry into this wonderful Contrivance of God's Love to men. And *S. Paul* affirms, that they are taught it by the Church; they are fain to learn it at ſecond hand, as being unable to read it in the Mirror of divine Underſtanding, which they are alway looking upon.

This *Mystery of his Will in Chriſt* was hid from former ages; now in Col. 1. 26, *Gospel-light* fully diſcover'd, now that Chriſt is become a *Light to light* Luke 2. 32, *ten the Gentiles*.

Nor has it leſs of *Comfort* and *Benefit*, then of *Myſtery*; there is ſuch an intertexture of *Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs* in it, that it is big with as many Advantages as Wonders.

2. *Comfortable*; Conſider how welcome *Deliverance* is to a man in Danger, *Ransom* to a captive Slave, *Recovery* to a dying man, a *Reprieve* to a Malefactor condemn'd by the Law: Such, and more then all this infinitely to us ſinners is the deſign of Chriſt's coming into the World, if we will be truly ſenſible of our Condition.

If a temporal *Life*, if *Health* and *Liberty*, and ſuch worldly *Concerns* be ſo dear to us, ſo deſirable when we want them, ſo ſweet when we enjoy them; how ſhould we be affected with theſe *ſpiritual Bleſſings*, Eph. 1. 3, wherewith God hath bleſt us in Heavenly places in Chriſt?

I. For the general *Theſis*; that *Chriſt came into the World* to ſave ſinners: where by the coming of *Chriſt into the World*, we are to underſtand and comprehend the whole Tranſaction of God incarnate; all that *Chriſt* has done and ſuffered in our Nature for us; the whole *Series* of buſineſs, from the very firſt Deſign and Undertaking, to the full Accompliſhment. In this ſenſe Chriſt in New-Teſtament language is call'd *ερχομενος*, he that cometh.

This may be made out by ſix *Propoſitions*.

1. That

1. That Christ procured and purchased Salvation for sinners by his Death and Resurrection.
2. That he proclaimed and published Salvation in his Doctrine and Example.
3. That he proposes and tenders Salvation in the Word and Sacraments.
4. That he orders all Means necessary for their Salvation in his Providences and Ordinances.
5. That he virtuates all the Means and makes them effectual to Salvation by the Influence of his Spirit, and the Assistance of his Grace.
6. That he insures and ascertains Salvation by Earnests and Pledges of future Glory.

And in all these is made up the sum of his Design that he came to save sinners.

1. He came to procure and purchase Salvation for sinners. This Purchase of his was

Perform'd at his Death.

Declar'd at his Resurrection.

At his Death; then he paid down the Price of his Blood, for the Propitiation of our sins; when the Merits of his Passion were to take their price and value from the Dignity and Excellence of his Person.

Psal. 49. 8.

Had we been put upon this part, we must have lain under it for ever. It cost more to redeem souls than so. Justice was satisfied, Wrath appeas'd, Law answered, all difficulties removed for us by Christ; all done to our hand.

Rom. 1. 4.

Rom. 4. 25.

At his Resurrection, his Triumphs over sin and death and hell were fully dislaid, when he was declar'd to be the Son of God with power: He died for our sins, but he rose again for our Justification, and for his own too; to make out, that it was a plenary Satisfaction.

Eph. 2. 17.

Luke 24. 19.

2. To proclaim and publish Salvation to them that were near, and to them that were far off, by the Promulgation of the Gospel. This first in his own Person, in that he was mighty in Word and Works: and that

John 7. 46.

John 15. 24.

In his Doctrine; acquainting us with the whole Will of God concerning our Salvation. And this heavenly Doctrine was confirmed by divine Miracles. He spoke as never man spake, and did as never man did.

Hebr. 2. 10.

In his Example; as the Captain of our Salvation, he went the way before us; and therefore took our Nature, to encourage our Obedience. And though in those things that concern'd his Mediatorship, wherein he acted God as well as Man, we are not obliged, nor indeed can we imitate him; yet in all other things he requires our Imitation.

3. To propose and tender it in the Word and Sacraments, in the preaching of the Word, and the administration of Sacraments: Had he taken no course to continue the Memory of his Doctrine and Sufferings, People might have some excuse for their neglect; but his Doctrine he has left consign'd in the Canon of Scripture, and his Satisfaction is still represented in the Sacraments.

First, *in the Word preached*, by appointing a *Ministry*. Since in Law, what is done by such deputation is as good, as if the person himself did it. So that *who receiveth you*, saith he, *receiveth me*: Thus in continual Succession, throughout the several ages of the Church, it hath been deliver'd down from hand to hand. Matth. 10. 40.

Again, the *Sacraments* are standing Ordinances, a constant staple and Mart for Sinners to have recourse to; especially that of his *Body and Blood*, to seal our Pardons and to renew our Engagements.

Now have you not heard? have you not seen? has not Christ been offer'd to you, as if himself had been present? *before your eyes evidently set forth, Crucified among you*. For if you will not hear *Moses* and the *Prophets*; if you will not attend the *Word* and *Sacraments*; neither will you believe, though one rise from the dead; though Christ himself should come again in Person. Gal. 3. 1. Luke 16. 31.

4. To take order for all convenient and suitable *Means*, to help us and further us on in our Salvation. If he had left us unprovided, there might be some excuse for our neglect; now we are inexcusable in that nothing is wanting to us but our selves. We are furnish'd with all things necessary, but a Will to make use of them. And that he hath done.

*In his Providences*. As he is, by his *Mediatorial Office*, *King of the Nations*, having all Power given him in heaven and in earth; thus he orders his *Providential Dispensations* to be so many calls to Repentance, with *Mercies* alluring, with *Judgments* affrighting, sometimes by *Afflictions* and *Sicknesses* visiting us; otherwhile by outward supplies and worldly supports incouraging us. Jer. 10. 7. Matth. 28. 12.

*In sacred Offices and Institutions*. This as he is the *Head of the Church*. It was not for nothing that he says, *dic Ecclesiae*, Tell the Church. He intended to delegate some Authority sure to her, as his *Spouse*, his *Body*; and yet it is sad to think, that sacred Offices are too much slighted by those, who would be thought the best *Christians*. Eph. 1. 22. Matth. 18. 17.

5. To *virtuate* and make effectual all his appointed *Means* by the influence of his *Spirit*, and the assistance of his *Grace*. If there were no *Means*, or those *Means* dry and insipid, insignificant things, and not of force to their end, there would be some plea; but if they prove so to any one, it is their own fault.

The *Prayers of the Church* are dull and flat to those who come with dull affections. Thus *Providences* themselves are often unheeded, and the *Word* and *Sacraments* themselves (if peoples minds be not rightly qualified) prove to no Advantage.

S. *Paul* himself, amongst idle *Criticks*, past for on better then a *Babler*. Unworthy receivers go no further then the outward *Elements*. It were well, if they did not, if that were all; but the *Apostle* affirms, *they eat and drink damnation*. Acts 17. 18. 1 Cor. 11. 29.

The fault is not in the *Means* then. There is the *Spirit* attends the *Word*, and *Grace* to be convey'd by the *Sacraments*; all the *Ordinances* and *Offices* are impregnated with Vertue to render them effectual to Salvation.

By



By the *Spirit* is applied and set home to the heart and conscience the *Word* with power, and he accompanies the *Sacraments* with vertue. He witnesseth with the *Water* in the one Sacrament, with the *Blood* in the other, 1 *John* 5. 8. *There are three that bear witness on Earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood.*

Eph. 2. 5.

By *Grace* we are saved, and by *Grace* led along to Salvation; that exciting our Wills, preventing us with holy Motions, restraining us from evil, assisting us to good, working all our good Works in us, persevering to the finishing of what is begun in us, justifying us by the Blood of Christ from the guilt of our sins, and sanctifying us by his Spirit from the rule and dominion of them.

6. Lastly, to insure and ascertain Salvation to us by *Earnests* and *Pledges*, by foretastes and anticipations, of our present Acceptance in Christ, and of our future Happiness. If there were no *Certainty* in the thing believed, no *Assurance* in the person believing; what would signify all these Methods of saving men?

Phil. 3. 12.

1 Cor. 10. 12.

I must confess, to have a *πανεσπερία*, a full personal Assurance, is a singular Favour, not to be hoped for possibly by all, that are also truly pious. S. Paul himself was not over-confident, *Not as though I had attained*, says he; and it is his general Caution, that he that thinks he standeth, take heed lest he fall: yet the *Romanists* I cannot approve, that hold it not attainable at all in this Life.

Eph. 4. 30.

I know there is a twofold certainty; *Certitudo objecti*, & *Certitudo subjecti*. That would not be altogether satisfactory without this. This may be without saving faith; an Historical or Temporary faith may serve turn for that; whereas by saving Faith a man applies the Love of God and the Grace of Christ to himself, and this by the Communication of the Spirit; especially at such times as this, with fresh incomes.

It is his Office to seal us unto the day of Redemption. Communion-days are his Seal-days. O may we all, that are intended thither, so find it!

This I dare say, that though there may not be a Constancy, not an Evenness of this blessed Assurance, perhaps in any one; yet there is not any truly pious soul, that is utterly a stranger to it; or if so, they have but too just reason to suspect their state.

To conclude with a brief Application.

Luke 7. 30.

1. If Christ came into the World thus wonderfully, on purpose to save thee, do not thou, as the Pharisees did, defeat his design of Love to thy own hurt; acknowledge thy sins and accept of Salvation.

Psalm 116. 12, 13.

2. Walk thankfully with God. Thus the Apostle, *verse 12. I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, &c.* Neglect no opportunity of commemorating this great Benefit of his. This Sacrament is call'd the Eucharist, a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. To this belongs that of the Psalmist; *What shall I render unto the Lord? I will take the Cup of thanksgiving and pay my vows, &c.*

II. Which that we may the better do, let us take along with us the Example of that great Apostle, which is the particular Instance of the general Doctrine; who is so far from the proud boasting Pharisaical humour of undervaluing and censuring others, and preferring himself, that, in an humble and grateful sense of his Saviour's goodness and his own un-

wor-

worthiness, he does, to the Glory of God and the Comfort of sinners, acknowledge himself *the Chief* of that number.

This, as on the one hand it shews *S. Paul's* great *Humility* and *Gratitude* to God, who had been graciously pleas'd to reach out his Favour to such a sinner as he had been; and his *Charity* to others, by reckoning himself among the vilest of men, and placing himself in the Van-guard of sinners: so on the other hand, it serves partly for our *Incouragement*, and partly for our *Instruction*, whatever our sinful estate may be.

1. For *Incouragement*; inasmuch as there is none so good, but needs a Saviour; none so bad, but may have him. For if *Christ came to save sinners*, and the *Chief* of sinners found Favour, why may not *I*, why maist not *thou*, why may not *you all*, whoever you are, whatever your sins be, apply our selves to this common Salvation, and hope to obtain the like Mercy at the hands of our gracious God?

Indeed had *Christ* come only to save this sinner and that sinner, *Peter* and *John*, &c. so as to exclude the rest; his Design of coming into the World might have lookt somewhat like the uncertainty of a *Lottery*; and men might, with melancholy reflections upon themselves justly entertain sad desponding Thoughts of their Eternal state: but now since *he came*, in a general indefinite way, to *save sinners*, we have all the reason in the World to hope well of our Saviour's kindness, and to incourage our selves in labouring according to that Hope, as knowing that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. That is the

1 Cor. 15:58.

2. For *Instruction* too; that we take all possible care in forsaking our sins, and applying our selves diligently to the means of Salvation.

Wherefore that we may with Comfort apply this *general Doctrine* particularly to our own Souls, as *S. Paul* here does, it will be necessary to *examine* our selves by some *Marks*, whether we are indeed such Sinners, as are likely to share in that Salvation which *Christ* hath wrought for us.

These *Marks of Tryal* are three: When a man upon inquiry into himself finds himself truly and thoroughly convinc'd of his *Sin*, of his *Saviour*, of his *Duty*.

Of his *Sins*, so as to *repent* him of them;

Of his *Saviour*, so as by a lively *faith* to accept him; and

Of his *Duty*, so as to resolve upon a new *Obedience*, and heartily to endeavour it.

If this be thy case, then *S. Paul's* case and *thine* are alike; and thou maist with him apply the general Doctrine comfortably to thy self.

1. First then; Art thou convinced of thy *sin* to *Repentance*?

When thou considerest the *turpitude* of it, dost thou cover thy face with *shame*?

When thou think'st of God's heavy *displeasure*, that is due to thy sin, dost thou fill thy heart with *sorrow*?

And when thou look'st before thee and beholdest the *danger* of it, and the sad Consequences, it doth irrecoverably expose thee to, if thou continuest in it, dost thou find thy self possess'd with a godly *Fear*? such a fear as may keep thee from offending wilfully and of set Malice against thy God and against thy own Soul to boot.

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2. Art thou convinced of the necessity of thy *Saviour* to *faith*?

Have the terrors of the *Law* and the horrors of a guilty *Conscience* seized thee? Have they broken all thy foolish *Confidences*, put thee to thy shifts, emptied thee of thy self, and laid thee low in the sense of those *Eternal* ruins, that hang over thee, and of thine own inability to get out of that lost *Estate*, and so driven thee to a close Dependance upon the *Righteousness* and satisfaction of the holy *Jesus*?

Lastly; Art thou convinced of thy *Duty* to a new *Obedience* and Amendment of life?

Hast thou fully resolv'd it with thy self, and dost thou vigorously and constantly labour after it.

Dost thou stick as close to thy blessed Saviour's *Example*, as thou dost to his *Merit*?

Dost thou impartially endeavour to conform thy self to the *Divine Law*, nor only upon a *Moral* account, as 'tis a rule of Life; but, as a true bred Christian, as an ingenuous Child of God should do, under an Obligation and sense of *Gratitude*?

And art thou, in a word, conscientiously perswaded, that no man shall be e're a whit the better for the *Promises* of the Gospel, that does not carefully observe the *Precepts* thereof? and dost thou order thy *Practice* accordingly?

If thou art convinced of these things, if thou beest thus affected, thus resolv'd; be of good Cheer and Comfort thy self in the Design and Labour of thy Saviour's Love.

Now these three, *Repentance*, *Faith*, and new *Obedience*, as they are the main *Conditions* of the Gospel; so with those other two forementioned Vertues, we took notice of in the Apostle, of *Thankfulness* to God, and *Charity* towards men, they are the five necessary *Qualifications* of worthy *Receivers*.

May God grant unto me and to you all, as many as intend to be Partakers of the *Holy Communion*, that we may all, in this our solemn Address, being thus qualified, come thither with penitent and devout hearts, and return thence with blessed *Assurances* of *Pardon* and religious *Purposes* of *Amendment of Life*, to the Praise of his *Grace* and the *Salvation* of our Souls, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen*.



## *Of the Cause and Effect of Christ's Death.*

A Sermon Preached at *Whiteball* in the Lent-course,  
April 9. 1679.

Rom. IV. xxv.

*Who was delivered for our Offences, and was raised again for our Justification.*



*S*T. Paul, in the Doctrinal part of this *Epistle*, having undertaken to prove, that a man cannot be justified by the works of the Law, but by Faith; in this *Chapter* brings in the Instance of *Abraham*, the Father of the faithful, whose faith, even before the Law, and whilst he was yet in uncircumcision, was imputed to him for Righteousness.

Now the same way, as he, who is the father of us all (as he calls him) was justified; the same way, and no other, must we his Children, if we follow the footsteps of his Faith, expect to be justified likewise; which he reduces into an Argument, verse 23. and 24. That it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall in like manner be imputed, if we believe on him that rais'd up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

*Who was delivered for our offences, and was rais'd again for our Justification.*

Here are in these few Words compris'd and express'd two great Articles of Faith, wherein the sum and scope of all Evangelical Doctrine consists; the *Death* and *Resurrection* of Christ.

Upon these two hinges the whole frame of *Christian Religion* turns.

These were the main and almost only subjects of Apostolical preaching at first; as appears in S. Peter's two Sermons *Acts* 2. and 3. and S. Paul's discourse at *Athens*; and accordingly he declares to the *Corinthians* in 1. *Epistle*, Chap. 15. the Gospel which he had preached to them; namely, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures: and so elsewhere these two are often joyn'd together, as the two fundamentals and pillars of Christianity.

And sure these *two* are seasonable and necessary Heads of Meditation in this holy time of *Lent*; which was mainly instituted for this very end, that we may prepare our selves for keeping the Christian Passover, which we shall then be rightly fitted to do, when we shall find Sin kill'd in us by virtue of his *Death*, and our selves raised again to newness of life by the power of his *Resurrection*.

*Two Parts* there are then in my Text; the one the *Death*, the other the *Resurrection* of our Lord and Saviour, together with the reason and purpose of each; to wit, that *he was delivered*, that is, died, *for our sins*, and *rose again for our justification*.

And each of these *two Parts* will afford us a double *Proposition*.

For first, in that *he was delivered for our offences*, thence we learn;

I. That *our Offences were the only cause of Christ's being delivered up to death*. And

II. That *this delivery and death of his*, having wrought a full and plenary Satisfaction to God's Justice and to the Law for us, *is the alone Meritorious and procuring Cause of our Pardon and Reconciliation*.

Thus he died for our sins, to suffer for them, and to satisfy in his sufferings for them, and by that Satisfaction to reconcile us to God, to merit and procure for us our Pardon.

Again from the other part, that *he was rais'd again for our Justification*, we observe;

I. That *Christ's Resurrection made out his Satisfaction*, and made good our *Discharge and Acceptance*. And

II. That *this Resurrection of his obliges us to Righteousness and newness of Life*: since none will be actually justified, but those that are risen with him.

The first part will take up our present time.

Our *Offences* were the occasions of Christ's being *delivered*; and his being delivered the reason of our being acquitted.

Our *sins* were the only causes of his *Death*; and his Death was the only cause of our *Reconciliation*.

Those sins of ours being laid upon him, brought down God's wrath upon him even to death, and turn'd it away from us, even to eternal Life through Faith in him.

I. *He was delivered for our Offences*; that is, *Our offences were the cause of Christ's being delivered up to death*: which *Proposition*

1. We shall first *Prove* and make it good, that it was so.

2. *Explain* it and make it out, how it was;

And lastly in brief *Apply* it.

I. For the Probation; and that in respect of *God the Father*, who gave him to die for us, of *wicked men*, who compassed and contrived his Death; and of *Christ himself*, who voluntarily surrendered and yielded up himself.

For he was, in all these *three* respects, *deliver'd for our offences*.

Acts 2.23. First, *God the Father deliver'd him by his determinate Counsel and fore-knowledge*, as *S. Peter* expresses it; having from eternity design'd this way of giving his Son for the Satisfying of his *Justice* to sin, and for the deriving his *Mercy* to sinners by him.

Upon

Upon this account Christ was to be and was delivered up to Death, to satisfy God the Father in several of his Attributes; to mention but three, his Sovereignty, his Justice, and his Mercy.

1. His Sovereignty, as he is our Creator. He had implanted a Law into his rational Creature, a Law written in the heart, for a Rule of actions; otherwise called the Covenant of Works, the Tenor of which Covenant was, *Do this and live*; and the sentence of that Law was, *The Soul that sinneth shall die.* Rom. 2.15. Luke. 10.28. Ezek. 18.4.

Besides this, God gave our first Parents a Command of trial, with a particular Sanction and Menace of death.

By their disobedience and Fall a forfeiture being made, which we now, through natural Corruption derived from them, being no ways able to recover, and consequently liable to spiritual and eternal, no less then to natural Death, Christ the second Person of the glorious Trinity, steps in betwixt us and Justice, and takes it upon himself; and to this end takes up our Nature, wherein he might suffer and satisfy for the sins of men, according to that of the Psalm (as it is quoted in the Hebrews) *a body hast thou prepar'd for me*; of which body all the Levitical Sacrifices were but types. *Sacrifices and Offerings thou wouldst not*; yes, he appointed them; but they would not serve the turn, nor could they answer the end of their Institution. *Then said I; lo, I come to do thy will, O God*; and thus Satisfaction was made to God's Sovereignty. Heb. 10.5, 7.

2. His Justice required it; since without blood no Atonement, no Expiation, as the Author to the Hebrews lays it down for a Rule. And no other cheaper blood would have serv'd to have bought our Peace. Heb. 9.23.

If whole Hecatombs should have been sacrificed, if rivers of oyl pour'd out for Drink-offerings; if all Mankind should have suffered, they must have lain by it for ever. There was no other way of making Satisfaction to God's Justice but by Christ's precious Death. Mic. 6.7.

I speak now within compass of Gospel-knowledge. I shall not enter into a dispute, whether God could have pardoned sin without satisfaction, or whether satisfaction might have been made any other way; but this is that, wherein all pious minds must acquiesce, that God in his infinite wisdom could not have contrived, nor out of his unspeakable goodness have pitched upon a more indearing way to the children of men, then this was of sending his own Son to satisfy his justice and to procure his mercy by dying for us.

3. As his Justice exacted the Death of the Offenders, so Mercy accepted their Surety; as it is in several cases in Law, *per se & per alium*, by ones self or by proxy; what is so done being as valid, as if ones self had done it.

So then out of Mercy and kindness to us he was to be delivered. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son. John. 3.16.

Thus we being dead in Trespases and Sins, not able to stir a hand or a heart to help our selves, Christ dying for our Sins made satisfaction to procure us his Mercy. Eph. 2.1.

Secondly, As God righteously delivered him and mercifully gave him for us; so wicked men deliver'd him up too; and not for any Crime, they could object to him; for he had openly made that challenge to them, *which of you convinces me of Sin?* John. 3.46.



'Twere their own crimes, not his, that put them upon the prosecution. *Judas* out of *covetousness* betraid him; the *Jews* out of *malice* gave him up, and call'd for his Life; *Pontius Pilate* out of *cowardice* and base Compliance deliver'd him to be crucified.

Acts 4. 27.

And this to fulfil that Prediction of the *second Psalm*, as *S. Peter* applies it, that *Heathens* and *Jews* should conspire his Death; in that all of all Nations were to be concern'd in the Benefits of it.

Matth. 27. 4.

And yet they all consented in this Truth, that he died not for any Offence of his own. So *Judas*, when he reflected upon what he had done, confest he had betraid innocent Blood; and the *High Priest* of the *Jews*,

John 11. 50.

Acts 3. 13.

as if he had been inspired, declared that it was expedient one should die for the People; and the *Roman Judge* himself thought him so innocent, that for his part he was determined to let him go; and acknowledg'd in the Title, he set over him, which he wrote himself, so, as if the Holy Ghost had guided his Pen, that he was *King of the Jews*, the expected *Messias*.

These were the immediate *Authors* of his *Death*, and the wicked *Instruments* of bringing God's righteous and gracious Purpose to pass; which *Purpose* and *Decree* of his does not at all justifie or in the least excuse the wickedness of those Instruments, by which it was accomplished; since his Will for a thing to be done does not by any necessary consequence infer his approving the manner of doing it.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

Luke 23. 34.

And this shews, that as it was a high presumptuous sin in them, that thus deliver'd him, the *Holy and Just one*; so it proves, that he was delivered for our sins, by this very Instance, that he died for those very Persons, who were the Contrivers and Abettors, the Authors and Instruments of his Death; according to *S. Peter's Doctrine* speaking of those who *deny the Lord that bought them*; for which reason it was that upon the Cross he prays for them; *Father, saith he, forgive them*: which implies, they might upon their Repentance have been forgiven, by virtue of that very blood which themselves had been guilty of spilling.

John 10. 18.

Thirdly; *Christ*, in respect of himself, in regard of his own voluntary undertakings, was, upon the account of our sins, to deliver up himself, and so did; for *he laid down his life*: where we have to consider his *Ingagement* and his *Performance*.

Hebr. 8. 6.

Hebr. 9. 16.

2 Cor. 5. 19.

For what was it he undertook, but to be the *Mediator of a new and better Covenant* betwixt God and us? and how was this to be, but by answering first for our Failleurs in the old one? and how could that be done but by his Death? for a *Testament* (such a Covenant this was) was not to be made good but by the death of the Testator.

Rev. 13. 8.

It is said, *God was reconciling the World to himself by Christ*. Was *reconciling*, that shews the early *Ingagement* of Christ even by eternal Counsel; the thing was agreed on from the first, whence he is call'd the *Lamb slain from the beginning of the World*.

Again, *was reconciling* denotes the *leisurely and effectual Execution* of it all along in time; so that the miscarriage, where there is any, lies on our side. Christ undertook (and God agreed to it) the reconciling of the World: but those who still keep up their Animosities, and will not lay down the Weapons of their Hostility, must not look for God's reconciliation to them, since they stand unreconcil'd to God and to those terms upon which Christ undertook their Peace.

Further,

Further, Christ made good his *Undertaking* in his *Performance*; he went thorough all the Buiness.

For whereas himself was not liable to the stroke of Justice, and to the severity of the Law, it follows that it was for us wholly that he suffered, that he was *deliver'd for our sins*, and that *he who knew no sin, was made sin*, <sup>2 Cor. 5. 21.</sup> that is, according to the propriety of Hebrew speech, a Sacrifice for sin; or taking it in the Letter, that our sins were imputed to him, as if he had been a real sinner; or that he was then, bearing the sins of the whole World upon him, lookt upon as *sin* in the very abstract. This for *Pro-bation*.

II. For the *Explanation* of it; in regard of the *Persons* for whom, and of the *Penalty* it self, to which he was *delivered*.

1. Consider we the *universal* Benefit which redounds to all the sons of men from *Christ's Death*, that there is no man that will repent him of his sins and believe in his Saviour that died for him, that can miscarry; for he has to plead, that Christ was delivered for his offences.

He died for *sins*, for *all sins*; for *sinners*, for *all sinners*; so S. Paul argues 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. *For the love of Christ*, says he, *constraineth us*; *because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And he died for all, &c.* and so the Author to the Hebrews affirms, that *he tasted Death* <sup>Hebr. 2. 9.</sup> *in the name of every individual person*; that the Merit and Influence of his Obedience and Righteousness might be adequate to the Demerit of the first *Adam's* Transgression.

That *Distinction*, which some bring here, that his Death made Satisfaction for the sins of all men *sufficiently*, not *efficiently*, is it self an insufficient, an insignificant distinction.

He died *actually* and *intentionally* for all, and *effectually* too for all those that by Faith apply him.

As in the time of an *Epidemick* distemper, a *Catholicon*, a Sovereign remedy cures all, supposing they make use of it; but if neglected, avails nothing. Such is the *Balsam* of Christ's Blood for the healing of all wounded Consciences; but if not applied, can do no good to those that trample on it, and look upon it as a common thing; not that it self is any way ineffectual, but that they who neglect it, justly forfeit the Benefit of it, and aggravate their Miscarriage by slighting so great Salvation. <sup>Hebr. 10. 29.</sup>

Thus the *Word* proves the *savour of Death* to those that either reject <sup>2 Cor. 2. 15.</sup> or disobey it; and so we read of some, who <sup>Luke 7. 30.</sup> *in testimony of the Gospel, defeated and disappointed the Counsel of God* to their own hurt, which was design'd for their good.

2. The *Penalty* he underwent, in the manner and circumstances of his Death, sets out how he was *delivered for our offences*.

There are *three* things here to be taken notice of, the *Shame*, the *Pain*, and the *Curse* of the *Cross*: it was a shameful, a painful, and an accursed kind of death; and this in answer and proportion to *three* things, that are in our *offences*, in every sin a man commits, *Macula*, *Reatus*, and *Morsus*.

1. A *blot*, a stain or blemish upon the sinner, which may make him justly *asham'd*.

2. *Guilt*, that is, the obligation to Punishment, and that inflicts pain.

3. The *Remorse* and sting of Conscience and the sense of Wrath, which subjects the man to a *curse*.

1. *Shame*, arising from the *stain* of sin. There is a natural Turpitude in sin. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy Statutes ! then shall* Psal. 119. 5, 6. *not I be ashamed*, says the Psalmist, *when I have respect unto all thy Commandments*.

This was notorious in our *first Parents*, who immediately upon their Gen. 3. 7. sin were ashamed and hid themselves, and made them aprons of *Fig-leaves* to cover their nakedness. But God provided better for them ; he made Gen. 3. 21. them *Coats of skins*.

Now as those leather-Coats were badges of a laborious life ; so, if as some Interpreters tells us, they were the skins of Beasts, slain in Sacrifice, they were *Types* of *Christ*, who, when he was sacrificed on the Cross, had coat and skin and all torn off ; and were *Emblems* of his *Righteousness* too, which was to be a perfect *Covering* ; our own Righteousness being but *ficulneum Argumentum*, a Fig-leaf in comparison.

How was *Christ* put to shame, derided, mocked, scoffed at, spit upon, expos'd naked, only cover'd with our shame ? so that the bright Lamp of Heaven withdrew his light and blush'd to see such Dishonours done to the Son of God. This *shame* was due to our Offences.

2. *Pain* attending upon *guilt*, which obliges to Punishment ; pain both of *Body* and *Soul*, outward and inward, when he was upon the stretch of all the parts of his Body, and faculties of his Soul on the Cross.

As to his *body* ; his *Back* was plow'd and furrowed with the stripes of the Scourge ; his *Head* pierced with the Thorns, that the blood trickled down like the consecrating oyl from the Sacrificers head, to the skirts of his garment, even to the meanest soul that belongs to his Priestly Office ; his *Hands and Feet* bored with nails ; his *Side* gored and open'd with the Lance, to the letting out his life-blood together with the Water in the *Pericardium*, the purse of his Heart.

Thus in the Language of the *Prophets*, he was *bruised* for our Transgressions, *wounded* for our Iniquities, and slain for our sins.

Again, his *Soul* was in great Torment and heaviness. He was a *man of sorrows* all his life ; though he had all human Affections, yet we never read he *laught* : but in his last *Agony*, then was the *Epitaph* of his sorrows, when his grief forced *clots of blood* out at every pore of his Body, to give vent to the strong Passions and Emotions of his Mind. And this he underwent for us for our sins.

3. The *Curse* from the *sting* of Conscience and the *sense* of God's Wrath and Indignation due to our sins. For besides those Inflictions, I have mention'd before, having our sins upon him, he lay under God's most heavy *Displeasure*.

He was not only harassed with the *terrors of death*, as a man, from natural Resentments ; but with *horrors of Conscience* too, as a guilty Person. He was *reckon'd among Transgressors*, and so treated ; inso-much that the Evangelist himself, S. *Luke*, doth as good as term him a Malefactor, when he tells us, there were *two other malefactors crucified with him*.



Let me not be mistaken : I do not mean by those *horrors of conscience*, such as the reprobate and damned ones feel, and are accompanied with *despair*. No; our *Saviour*, even at worst of his extremity, retain'd a just confidence in his Father's love, and own'd him for his God even then when he complain'd he had forsaken him : *My God, my God*, says he, *why hast thou forsaken me?*

And this *Curse* was declared to the World in the manner of his Death; *Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*

Gal. 3. 13.

It was the tree of good and evil, which made this a cursed Tree; and it was the *Curse* which imbittered the Pains he suffered; that was the *Gall* and *Vinegar*, that Ingredient in the *Cup* of his Passion, which made him desire, if it had been possible, it might have past from him.

How ought this to be matter of *Terrour*, and matter of *sorrow* and *shame* to us, that our blest Lord should be *delivered* up thus for our *Offences*?

1. How should this *terrifie* and amaze impenitent Sinners, and strike them into a damp, when they consider the Justice of God to sin, with what severity he treated his own Son, when he found our sins upon him? how can they expect he should spare them, if they be found at last in their sins?

If *Christ's* personal Righteousness and Innocence could not prevail to procure him any favour; but he was scorched and wasted, as it were with flames of Divine ire; if this were done to the *green tree*, the branch of the Lord, what shall be done to the *dry*? what shall become of those who are by corrupt habits and vitious customs grown rotten and dead in their sins, and have been making themselves, through the courses of their lives, fit Fuel for Hell-fire?

Luke 23. 31.

O let us abominate and detest those sins of ours, that are so abominable in the sight of God; and let us not be so fool-hardy, as to put our selves to the venture of living and dying in our sins, and so bring upon our selves the sad necessity of suffering eternally those pains and punishments, which our Saviour has out of infinite Love to us suffered already in our behalf.

2. Further, with what shame ought we to cover our Faces, with what *grief* to fill our Hearts, if there be any ingenuity left either in face or heart, when we look upon our blessed Lord and Saviour expos'd to open Reproach, and most cruelly handled by his Enemies, and forsaken by his Friends and by his God too, as he hung upon the Cross for our Offences? How should our Eyes weep and our Hearts bleed over those our Offences, and mourn over him whom we have pierced?

Zach. 12. 10.

This Meditation, if it might beget a true *Contrition* and Compunction of Heart, it would be a fair Preparative, as it is a necessary Ingredient to our Repentance.

Draw up then, *my sinful soul*, a Catalogue of thy own *sins* and of thy Saviour's *sufferings*, and compare them together, which are the more for number, which the more grievous in nature. It was thy *sins* that caused and heightned all his *Pains*, that sharpened the *Thorns*, that drove and clenched the *Nails*, and thrust the killing *Spear* into his precious side and Love-sick Heart. 'Twas they were the *sling* of his Death, whose venom drank deep of his spirits: let the thoughts of it at least sink deep into thine.

And then by this means thou wilt be the better fitted for the Benefit of the next Consideration, which is our *second* general head; that

II. *The Death of Christ is the alone meritorious and procuring Cause of our Pardon and Reconciliation*; wherein there are two things to consider, his *Merit* and our *Pardon*.

I. The Merit of Christ, wherein that consisted. And that was in three Instances.

1. The Innocence of his Life.
2. The *Voluntariness* of his *Undertaking*.
3. The *Dignity* of his *Person*.

II. Our Pardon; in what manner that was procured: and that *three* ways.

1. By way of a *Sacrifice*.
2. By virtue of a *Covenant*.
3. In the nature of a *Purchase*.

I. The *Merit* of *Christ*: that consisted

1 Pet. i. 22.

1. In the *Innocence* of his *Life*. There was no guile found in his Mouth, nor iniquity in his Hand: if there had, himself had been liable. He performed the first Covenant with an *exact Obedience*, that he might provide a second for us upon better and easier terms, whereby our *Sincerity*, however imperfect our Obedience should be, might be accepted in his Righteousness.

Now though his *personal Innocence* were a necessary Qualification, to fit him for his Mediatorial Office, to make himself and his Sacrifice acceptable, yet I place some part of his Merit in that; inasmuch as his *active* as well as *passive Obedience* was meritorious.

Gal. 4. 4.

Indeed as he was Man, *born of a Woman, made under the Law*, he was subject and accountable to the Law, as all other men are; yet this Oeconomy was design'd for our sakes, and to have an influence upon our Salvation.

That, which was his *Duty*, as *Man*, was our *Benefit* also, as *Saviour*; So in the *Nicene Creed* it is express'd, *who for us men and for our Salvation came down from Heaven, was incarnate, and was made Man*, as well as suffered and died. So the Church in her *Litany* has set down two Versicles; the one containing the most remarkable Passages of his Life, the other more particularly relating to his Death; *By his holy Incarnation, by his holy Nativity and Circumcision, by his Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation*; and so by all he did; no less then *by his Cross and Passion, by his precious Death and Burial*. Good Lord deliver us. All he *did*, as well as *suffered*, was in our behalf; as he was the second *Adam*, the Representative of Mankind.

Besides, this very thing was *voluntary*; he needed not upon his own account have been made Man, and so submitted himself to those Obligations.

II. In the *Voluntariness* of his *Undertaking* and Obedience. He *laid down his Life*, though he were *delivered*. And this no excuse to his Adversaries neither. His Death was *violent* yet *voluntary*.

He

He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess, &c. Let them that have tongues and knees look to that. Phil. 2. 8, 9. 10.

This *Voluntariness* added *Merit*, because he needed not to have engaged himself in this undertaking, but out of love to us: and as some observe, even after he had engaged himself, he did many things he needed not to have done: For his *Blood*, his *Life* was all, the Law could demand. But he gave us *Gospel-measure*, heaped up and running over; he thought he could not do too much for us; and hath left us a large stock of *Merit*, an ample Revenue and full Treasury of *Grace* for Sinners.

III. Which is the main; In the *Dignity* and *Excellence* of his *Person*. What he did, had been onely for himself; had he been meer Man. But he was *God* as well as *Man*.

Hereupon the *Church* is said to be purchas'd with the *Blood of God*; not that the *Godhead* could suffer: but by a Communication of Properties, that being ascribed to the *Person*, which was done in either *Nature*; for which reason *S. Peter* calls it his *precious blood*. Acts 20. 28. 1 Pet. 1. 19.

For as the Author to the *Hebrews* argues, Chap. 10. 4. it was not possible, that the blood of Bulls and of Goats should take away sins: and yet that common blood was of such force, by divine appointment, that being sprinkled upon the unclean, it sanctified to the purifying of the *Flesh*, Chap. 9. 13. But how much more, as he goes on there, shall the blood of *Christ*, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge our Consciences from dead works to serve the living God?

Now had the whole heavenly Host, all the *Angels* offer'd themselves in this Mediation; it would not have done: they being of a distinct Nature from us, and *impares capto*, unable to have gone thorough with the Undertaking. For the Law requir'd, that in the same Nature, which had offended, Satisfaction should be made; wherefore *Christ* took not upon him the Nature of *Angels*. Hebr. 2. 16.

And then, none but such an one, as might be *God* as well as *Man*, could make an infinite Satisfaction to Gods infinite Justice. He was *Man* then, that he might suffer; and *God* also, that he might satisfy.

II. Secondly. Our *Pardon*, how, and in what manner procured. And that was three ways.

1. By way of *Sacrifice*. He was the *Propitiation* for our sins. 1 John 2. 2.

The reason, why *Sacrifices* were instituted, was to appease and atone the offended Deity; since without bloodshedding there is no *Remission*, as the Author to the *Hebrews* told us. This was the sense and practice of all, even Heathen and Idolatrous Nations, in their false Worship.

And whereas those *Sacrifices* could not reach the end of their Institution; *Jesus Christ*, suffering Death upon the Cross for our Redemption, made there, by his one Oblation of himself once offered, a full and perfect Sacrifice and Satisfaction for the sins of the whole World, as our Church hath worded it in her Communion Service; where he was *Idem Sacerdos, Victimæ & Ara*; Himself at the same time both the Priest in his person, and the Sacrifice in his Human nature, and



the *Altar* too in his Divine, which sanctified the Offering and made it acceptable.

2. By virtue of *Covenant*; which was another use of *Sacrifices* also. *They that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice. Abraham* did so, and would have done it by his Son, which was a type of God the Father giving up his Son.

Further, *Christ* engag'd in *Covenant* for us; he put on the form of a servant, a *Covenant-servant*: whence that, which we read in the New Testament, *a body hast thou prepared for me*; is in the Hebrew, *mine ears hast thou bored*; which is all one in sense. It was a Jewish Custom to bore the servants ear with an awl at the door-post of the house; and this was the Purpose of his having a body prepared for him, only to be a Livery of Service. And for this service, as he was highly rewarded, so we are acquitted.

Psal. 50.5.

Tit. 2.14.

1 Pet. 1.18.

2 Cor. 5.20.

3. In manner of *Purchase*; for this we are styled his *Peculium*, that he might purchase to himself a peculiar People, and he bought us not with corruptible things, but with his precious blood; so that we are no longer our own, *we are bought with a price*. And this is the proper and natural Importance of *Redemption*, the ransoming of souls with a price.

These three ways of acquiring *Pardon* correspond exactly with the Considerations of his *Merit*.

In that he was a *Sacrifice*, he was to be spotless: This the *Innocence* of his Life.

Again, a *Covenant* is made by mutual agreement, and implies the free Consent of the Parties contracting. And this was the *Voluntariness* of his Undertaking.

Lastly, a *Purchase* supposes a valuable consideration. And this was enhanced by the *Dignity* of his Person.

To apply; This will afford us matter of *Exhortation*, of *Consolation*, and of *Trial*.

1. Let us be exhorted to die to our sins, as *Christ* died for them; and to crucifie our Old man with him, that the whole body of sin may be destroyed. We are told, *Rom. 6. 3.* that at our very admission into the Church we are baptized into his Death; his blood was as *water*, as well as as *fire*, was intended for a Bath to cleanse us no less then for a Price to redeem us: and this is the surest evidence we can have that we are redeemed by his blood, when we find our selves cleansed by it.

John. 11.16.

Let us, as *S. Thomas* says in *Lazarus* his case, go and die with him; let us mortifie our lusts; and, as we have been dead in sins, so be dead to them, else we shall have no benefit of his Death. The price of our Ransom has been paid, but we will not be ransomed; nay, we crucifie the Lord of Life afresh, and put him to an open shame, *Heb. 6.6.*

O rather let the love of *Christ* constrain us, as the Apostle *2 Cor. 5.15.* where he gives us a right account, what practical Use we should make of *Christ's* Death; says he, *He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.*

He died indeed for Sinners, but so as to save them from their sins, not with them, not in them; and was sent, as a Priest, to bless us in turning

Acts 3. 26.

ing every one of us from his Iniquities. Therefore let every one that <sup>2 Tim. 2.19.</sup> names the name of Christ, that professes to believe in him, and pretends to hope for any Benefit from that Satisfaction he hath made by his Death, depart from iniquity.

And when thou hast done this, *my soul*, when thou hast by a true Repentance departed from thine iniquities: Then thou maist be of good Comfort; Christ will ease thy guilty Conscience. Then thou maist plead *Christ's Merit* with the *Father's Justice*.

O God my faithful Creator, thou hast of thy own Mercy, and in Love to the World, delivered up thy only begotten; he by his exact Obedience has made amends for the sin and disobedience of my Forefather, he has satisfied thy Justice for me, and procured thy Mercy to me by dying for my sins. Accept, I beseech thee, what he has done and suffered for me, as thou hast engaged thy self by Gospel-Promise to do.

He has born the *shame*, indur'd the *grief*, and undergone the *curse* and thy heavy Displeasure due to my sins. O let that Sacrifice of his be, as it is, always acceptable in thy sight, that my Soul may live.

Though I be a *vile sinner*, and have broken all thy holy Laws and Commandments; he was an *innocent Person*, the *holy one* of God; though I am an *unworthy wretched* creature, he and his *Merits* are of an infinite *Value*; though I have *wilfully* transgressed, he hath as *voluntarily* undertaken for me. O let me find acceptance in thy *Welbeleeved*.

His one perfect Oblation has answered for all my sins. That *Covenant* which he has made with thee in my behalf, and sealed with his Blood, is the only Anchor of my Hope, and ground of my Assurance. Let me but have thy Grace to perform my part in it as he hath done his. He hath *purchased* me with a valuable Price; O cast not away my soul, any soul, that has been redeemed with his most precious blood!

But then to make good this *Plea* with divine Justice, we are to call our selves to a close *account*; that's the *last thing*.

3. *Tryal* to the best: For *ahis!* people are too apt out of a fond self-love to apply to themselves the Comforts of Gospel-Promises, without minding Gospel-Precepts; to rely upon the *Covenant*, without ever heeding or performing the *Conditions* of it.

And those *Conditions* are three; *Repentance, Faith, Obedience*.

Examin thy *Repentance* then, *my soul*, whether it be serious and unfeigned;

Try thy *Faith*, whether it be sincere and lively;

And call thy *Obedience* to the Test, whether it be aright and as it should be.

Dost thou *grieve* heartily for thy *sins*, and sympathize with thy Saviour's *sufferings*, pouring out thy penitential *tear* together with his meritorious *Blood* before the Lord?

Dost thou *hate* sin for its own sake, and humblest thy self under that Displeasure due to it? This looks like a genuine *Contrition*.

Hast thou a personal assurance within thy self, that Christ died for *thee*; as our common Profession teaches us to believe, that he redeem'd all Mankind: and does thy *faith* exert it self in vital acts and work it self out by Charity?

Dost

Dost thou depend wholly upon the *Merit* of thy Saviour ; and canst thou after all thy sorry Endeavours disclaim thy own Works, and humbly acknowledge that thou art an *unprofitable servant* ?

Is thy *Obedience* impartial, universal, uniform, constant and persevering ? or dost thou serve God by *fits* and by *halves* ; doing some *Duties* and neglecting others ; avoiding some *sins* and indulging thy self in others ?

Above all, is that *love of God*, which has been so plentifully poured forth upon all men in *Christ*, has it been shed abroad in thy heart, whereby thou maist evidence to thy self his Love to thee by thy loving him again ?

Rom. 12.7.

Upon this *Examination* of thy self, thou maist be fitted to keep thy *Christian Passover*, as the *Israelites* kept theirs, with *bitter Herbs* of *Repentance*, with the *unleavened Bread* of *Charity*, and with thy *Loins* girt with holy *Resolutions*, to walk in his ways, by the direction of his Spirit ; and, in a word, to offer up thy self, soul and body, as a *living Sacrifice* holy, acceptable unto God.

Now to God the *Father*, who gave his only *Begotten Son* for us ; to God the *Son*, who was *delivered* for our Offences ; and to God the *holy Ghost*, by whom we are *sealed* to the day of Redemption, be all *Praise*, *Honour*, and *Glory* now and for ever. *Amen.*



## Of Christ's Exaltation.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* before the King,  
*Nov. 13. 1670.* and since that at *Chelfsey*,  
 on *Holy Thursday, 1679.* being the  
 Day of the King's Birth  
 and Return.

Phil. II. ix.

*Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him.—*



N which Words we have *two* things mainly considerable.

1. Our blessed Lord's exalted State ; that *God hath highly exalted him.*

2. The Ground of that his Exaltation, exprest in that note of inference, *wherefore*, and in that other particle, *also*; which do both infer and evince the merit of his Obedience, not only to the accomplishment of our *Redemption*, that great work which he had undertaken, but also to the advancement of his own *Person*, as *God-man*; in that he, who, as 'tis in the foregoing verses, was God equal with the Father, stript himself of all his Glories, and humbled himself to become Man in a mean condition, to live a life of sorrows, and at last to die the worst of deaths. *Wherefore God also*, upon the account of his *Humility*, and in recompence of his *Obedience*, hath highly exalted him; making good that saying in our Saviour's person, which was so frequent in his mouth; *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

Luke 14. 11,  
 &c.

*Wherefore*] For those Condescensions of his Love to the children of men, for those voluntary Submissions and Abasements of himself, and for those great Instances of such a profound stupendous Humility; that he should so meekly comport with so many indignities and meannesses through the whole course of his Life, and at last willingly offer up himself to so ignominious, cruel, and accursed a Death, *even the Death of the Cross*, in obedience to the Father, for the benefit of Mankind.

*God also*] Whose Will he in all this perform'd, whose Justice and Severities he submitted himself to, and to whose Law he, being made man, did, as all other men were oblig'd to do, pay this Obedience;

in

in reward of these Services, and in acknowledgment of the high Merit of this his Humility and Obedience.

*Hath highly exalted him]* Hath in his human Nature advanced him to the highest pitch of Glory and Dignity, which that Nature is capable of, set him at the right hand of the Throne of God, and made him *Head of the Church*, and the *Lord of Life*, and invested him with all Authority and Power both in Heaven and in Earth; insomuch, that all Angels, Men and Devils are bound to do him Homage, and to own him as their Lord, the great Heir of Heaven, the supreme Governor of the Church, and the glorious Conqueror of Hell and of Death, to whom all things are put in subjection.

Hebr. 12. 2.

Eph. 1. 22.

Matth. 28. 18.

1 Cor. 15. 17.

I shall not go about to play the Oratour, had I any ability that way, in a triumphant Harangue to celebrate the Victories of the holy *Jesus*, to carry branches of *Palms*, *Hosanna's*, as the *Talmudists* call them, before him, and to pleat wreaths of *Laurel* for his Imperial Head; to set up the Trophies of his Conquests, and to display the Banners of his mighty Salvation. The matter, being so glorious and dazzling in it self, needs no such Adornments. I have rather design'd, this point of *Christ's Exaltation* being the main ground of Christian faith, the top and bottom of all pious Confidences, to handle it in a plain *Didactical* method, by discoursing of it particularly.

1. As to the *Subject* of it.
2. As to the *Parts* and *Degrees* of it.
3. As to the *Ends* and *Reasons* of it; and
4. In the last place conclude with an *Application* from the whole.

I. The *Subject* of it was *Christ*, not strictly in his *divine* Nature, nor merely in his *human*, but in his whole *Person*, as made up of both Natures, as he was *God and Man*, *God-man*.

For his *Divinity*; that was not capable, in its essential Glory, of any increase or diminution; but was now, in this *exalted state*, made more conspicuous and manifest to the World, which before had lain concealed under the sorry disguise of our Mortality.

1 Cor. 2. 8.

*Christ* was as much *God* at his death upon the Cross as ever: for the Godhead was impassible; the *Nature* could not suffer, though the *Person* did. Hereupon the Apostle tells them, they had crucified the *Lord of glory*. He was the *Lord of glory* then, as he hung crucified; but it did not appear so much, as when he rais'd himself to life again.

Matth. 27. 42.

If he be the *Christ*, say they, let him come down from the Cross. No; that he was not do; how had Scripture been fulfilled then? and how had the business, he came about, been effected, to suffer in the flesh for things done in the flesh? but, which was more miraculous and convictive, he was not to come down from the Cross, but to come up again from the Grave, to the undeniable proof of his *Divinity*.

Hebr. 1. 9.

John 1. 16.

But then his *Humanity*, that had real Advantages, by receiving all those Perfections and Felicities, which a created Nature is capable of; and that in Gospel-measure, pressed down and running over: being *anointed with the oyl of gladness above his Fellows*, because for his Fellows too; that of his fulness we might all be made Partakers, and the holy *Uction* might run down from the head of our high Priest to the skirts of his cloathing, even to the meanest believer.

First, his *Soul* was fill'd with all fulness of Wisdom and Grace; his Understanding enlarg'd with all Knowledges, his Will improv'd in all Virtues; as much as is possible for Faculties, that are finite, to contain: (for we must still distinguish betwixt the two Natures.) All those *ignorances* and *infirmities*, which without sin belong'd to him before, (he having taken up our Nature with all its sinless imperfections) being now done away; so that the *Manhood* is irradiated and inabled by the *Deity*, to know and to do all things that are requisite for him, as *God-man*, as our *Mediator*, to know and to do; and that in the highest and most intense degree.

And in these Advantages his *Body* went a sharer too. *A body hast thou prepared for me*, he says at first; a body taken from an immaculate Virgin, and fitted and shaped by the holy Ghost; such a body as might become the Son of God to wear in his earthly converse. But now another kind of body too; a body freed from all incumbrances of *hunger*, *thirst*, *cold*, *weariness*, *pain*, *decay*, *violence*; a body *pure*, *agile*, *strong*, *splendid*, furnished with all Accomplishments and Adornments: in a word, a *spiritual*, a *glorious* Body, to which our *vile body*, the Apostle tells us, shall at the Resurrection be made conformable; that as we have born the Image of the *earthly*, we may also bear the image of the *heavenly*. Hebr. 10. 5.

And yet this *body* of his so *glorified*, as to retain still the nature of a *body*; to be finite and limited to place; not, as the Doctrine of the *Papists* in their *Transubstantiation*, or the *Lutherans* in their *Consubstantiation* fancy, to have an *Ubiquity*, to be Omnipresent, to be at the same time in many places, or in the same place with another body.

For that it is said, he came in to his Disciples after his Resurrection, *the doors being shut*, *καλεισμένων θυρών* may signify *the doors having been shut*, but then at his entrance either open'd for him, or by Miracle opening of themselves, and giving way to him: and his sudden disappearance from the two at *Emmaus* was from his agility, that he could immediately remove himself from place to place, and does not argue his being at once in several places. Joh. 20. 19, 26.

And at his *Ascension* 'tis said, *he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven*, Luke 24. 51. and at his very *Resurrection* the Angels tell the women, *He is not here, he is risen*; which words do plainly infer a natural impossibility of his being in two places at once. And again expressly 'tis affirm'd of him, now he is in Heaven, that *the heaven must contain him* till the last day, when he shall come again in like manner, as he was seen going in the clouds: so that that Promise of his, that he will be *with us to the end of the World*, is not to be understood of a *local*, but of a *virtual* presence and his spiritual efficacy. Luke 24. 6.

Christ then in his whole Person was advanced and glorified; as *God*, with that Glory he had with the Father from the beginning, as himself in his agony pray'd he might: as *Man*, not only to recover *postliminio* that Righteousness and Perfection we lost in *Adam*, but to acquire also new additional Sanctity and Happiness and Rule. For he was in his Humility according to the *eighth Psalm*, which the Author to the *Hebrews* applies particularly to Christ, *ὑπερῶν*, *little lower than the Angels*: but now the *Human* Nature is in him rais'd above the *Angelical*. *Worship him all ye Gods*; ye *Elohim*, which in the *Psalmists* language are *Angels*; so that we are all in this new state by Christ's Resurrection made already *ἑταίροι*, *Form-Fellows with the Angels*; he being in our nature placed John 17. 5.



Eph. 1.21.

1 Cor. 15.27.

placed above all Principalities and Powers, and having all things, not only beasts and fowls and fishes, as the first *Adam* had, but Men and Angels and Devils put under his feet; and this power he was solemnly invested with, after he had, by rising again from the dead, death being the last Enemy, display'd his Triumphs over all infernal Powers; which brings us to our next.

II. The *Degrees* of his Exaltation; for *he highly exalted him*: so the *Syriack* Interpreter renders it, אֲסַנִּי וְסִרְמָה *multiplicavit sublimitatem ejus*, he lifted him up by several stories into Glory. And those were proportionable to his Humiliation: his *Resurrection* answering to his *Death*, his *Ascension* to his *Descent into Hell*, and his *Sitting at the right hand of God* to his *Continuance in the Grave* in a state of Death.

Of these, since they are fundamental *Articles* of Faith, Principles of Religion, that children are acquainted with, I shall not need in this Auditory to make a familiar Explication. I shall therefore but touch at them.

John 10. 18.

1. *He rose again*, not upon precarious terms, but partly on his Father's account; so *Acts* 2. 24. *Him hath God rais'd*: partly on His own, for he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again.

As *God*, he rose again by his own power; as *Man*, he was rais'd by the power and operation of the Deity. Accordingly two words are used to express the Resurrection, *again he rose again*, and *he was raised*. Not that the *Deity* was separated this while, though *Body and Soul* were; the *Hypostatical Union* of the two Natures being preserv'd even in the Grave.

He rose with the very same body that died; their eyes saw it, and their hands handled it, as *S. John* tells us in the beginning of his *first Epistle*, and the glorious scars of his Conquests still remain as marks of his meritorious sufferings.

After forty days converse, having given sufficient proofs of his revival, and left sufficient Instructions behind him with his Apostles, for gathering and governing his Church,

2. *He ascended up on high*; when the glorified God-man rode upon a triumphant cloud, and taking his farewell of Earth, went up from Mount Olivet into the *Empyrean* heaven, to take possession of his acquits, and to be inthron'd in his Royalties.

Isa. 47.5.

This even in his divine Nature; so the Psalmist, *God is gone up with a merry noise*; when, whether there be such a thing as *Pythagoras* fancied, the *Musick of the Spheres*, or no, the *Intelligences* themselves sure, the *Angels* and all the *heavenly Host* were not wanting in their gratulations and joyful shouts to bid their Prince welcome home, as they had done at his Birth, when he came a Stranger into the lower World. When he that descended the *Son of God* in the Incarnation, to take upon him our Nature, ascended the *Son of Man* in that very Nature, wherein he had acted and suffered, mounted upon the wings of the Wind into the regions of Bliss.

Nor needed the *Body* it self, being now glorified, any miraculous extraordinary Assistance of the Deity for its Transportation; all motion upward or downward being indifferent to a glorified body, that is sublimated and refined from all earthy dross.

But some one may say, the *Resurrection* and *Ascension* of *Christ* were not so peculiar Favours and Vouchsafements to him, as not to have been imparted to others besides him; nay, before him: witness *Lazarus* and others, that had been rais'd from the dead, *Enoch's* translation, and *Elias* his fiery Chariot.

I, but these were but types of him; and this happen'd to them not by their own power, but by virtue of him, *who is the Resurrection and the Life*; whose influences were alike backward on times past, as forward on time to come; as we read of some bodies of the dead Saints, that came out of their graves after his Resurrection, having been rais'd by his Magnetick touch, and appeared unto many.

He therefore is the *first-fruits* of them that slept, by whom the whole Lump of Nature is sanctified and invivified; and it was the same Faith in *Christ* advanced *Enoch* and *Elias*, as sav'd *Abraham* and the rest of the Faithful in the time of the Old Testament: and it is the same Faith saved them, as must save us, there being no other name under heaven, by which we can be saved. But then that

3. *He sits at the right hand of Glory*; this will give a full Answer to the *Objection*; if others have been exalted, yet, God hath highly exalted him, *ὡς ἐν ὁλῶν*.

This was a Privilege of special Merit and Dignation, when *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand*, in fulness of Power and Majesty; *that in all things*, and over all men, *he might have the Preheminence*.

And this, as it belongs to his *whole Person*, so even the *Human nature* has that advancement of Honour and Authority, that *he who was rais'd from the dead*, even the man *Jesus*, is placed far above all *Principality and Power and Might and Dominion*, and every name that is nam'd, not only in this world, but in that which is to come; and has all created things put under his feet, and is made *Head of the Church*. (*Eph. 1. 20. to the end.*) whose concerns he manages in this Royal state, as an everlasting *Priest*, representing his Merits, and pleading our Cause, having by his blood enter'd into the Holy of Holies, and appearing there in the presence of God for us; as a *Prophet*, sending forth his Spirit, empowering his Ministers, and virtuating his Word and Sacraments; and lastly as a *King*, governing not only his Church, but the whole World, through all parts whereof his Church was to be propagated by the preaching of the Gospel, according to that Commission, he gave to the Apostles, to go into all the World.

So that now being by *Virtue* of his *Mediatorship*, in this exalted state, *Lord* of all Creatures, *King of Nations*, as well as *King of Saints*, to order the Dispensations of *Providence* alike as of *Grace*; it follows hence, that all *Kings* and *Monarchs* in the world hold in *Capite* and by *Escuage* from him, (for the Shields of the Earth are his) and are oblig'd to do him Homage. So the *second Psalm* applies his *Exaltation*, having asserted *Christ's* universal Dominion; *Be wise now therefore*, says he, *O ye Kings*; *be learned, ye Judges of the Earth*: and where-in doth that Wisdom, that Learning consist? *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry*; the *kiss* being a token of subjection.

It is then no less *false* then *frivolous* a Distinction of some Dutch Divines and Popish Writers, that *Kings* and secular Princes take their Patient, and derive their Authority immediately from *God the Creator*, and are not properly subordinate to *Christ the Mediator*: where all these derivative Powers and Trusts are branches of the mediatorial Royalty; *Christ* being not only *Head of the Church*, in the care whereof, since it is become *Catholic*, all Power ought to be concern'd; but also *Governour of all Creatures*, and *Judge of all men*; so that all *Magistrates* are deputed under him, and commission'd by him, and are accountable to him: whereupon the Prophet *Ezay*, speaking of Gospel-times, says, *Kings shall be the Churches nursing Fathers*; and the Apostle gives special order to Bishop *Timothy*, that *Prayers and Supplications be made for Kings*, that under them we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all Godliness and Honesty; that being the great charge, they are intrusted with.

1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.

But, as the *Pope* on the one hand, so the *Consistory* on the other, (as they do generally agree in things prejudicial to *civil power*) would exclude *Kings* from having any thing to do in matters of *Religion*; and exempting themselves from all secular Jurisdiction, would have it believed, they are under *Christ's* own immediate Government for all Church-affairs. A *Troth*, as *Heretical*, as it is pregnant of *Rebellion*; as *Anti-scriptural*, as it is *Anti-Monarchical*; and that, whereon all our *Sects* ground the old line of their Disobedience: whereas it is no less *Orthodox* then *Legal*, what the *Church of England* holds, that the *King*, in all causes, and over all persons, as well sacred as secular, is next under *Christ*, within his *Majesties Realms and Dominions*, *supreme Moderator and Governour*, of an unappealable Authority, as to any human Court; and the *Oath* of the *King's Supremacy* is grounded upon that very *Allegiance* we owe to our blessed *Lord* himself.

2 Pet. 3. 4.

It may be objected against the Government of *Christ*, as it is in *S. Peter* against his *Coming*; what Sign is there of it? what visible Effect? how doth it appear? And if it be so, that *Christ* hath all Power in Heaven and in Earth; how comes it to pass, that there are so many Disorders all over the World? that *Christianity* rather looses then gets ground every where? *Infidelity* still being in possession of so many vast Countreys; *Mohometism* having over-run all the *Eastern Churches* long since, and going on still conquering and to conquer: and lastly, not to mention Tyrannies, Oppressions, and other wicked Practices, publickly in many places allow'd; the *Church* it self, where it is, broken into so many Factions and Parties, so many *Heresies* and *Schisms*; and *Religion*, where it is profess'd, fallen into that contempt, that it is almost grown a question, whether there be such a thing as the *Church*, such a thing as *Religion* or no?

Luke 13. 8.

The Answer is ready: This is no more then what our Saviour himself foretold would be, and it will be worse still; *When the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on the earth?* The universal Defection of *Faith* and *Manners* can no way derogate from the Glory of *Christ's* Exaltation and Government.

He governs us as Men, by the persons of men, and by Methods suitable to our Mortal state. He hath prescribed us a *Law*, left us a rule, the *Gospel*, which has out-liv'd Persecutions and Flames, and will outlast that funeral Pile, which shall burn down the World. He has appointed a *Ministry*, and has promised to be with them to the end of the World.



World. He has deputed *Governours* under him, who must give a severe account. If his *Officers*, if his *Viceregents*, fail in the discharge of their Trusts; if an universal Deluge of *Schism* or *Profaneness* bear down all Order; this cannot reflect upon *Christ's* Honour, who will exalt himself in the midst of publick Disorders, by neglecting those that neglect him, by punishing presumptuous Offenders, and by taking Vengeance of his Enemies, many times even in this Life, but, to be sure, at the dreadful day of Judgment. Nor do our Disorders in any sense disorder the Administrations of his *Providence* or his *Grace*.

The Church of God within the World is *Ezekiel's wheel within a wheel*, and both wheels are full of eyes, and most exact and regular in their Motions both, even when they seem to be most *eccentric*. Ezek. 10. 10.

Thus was it in the *Theocracy*, when God himself took upon him the immediate Care and Government of his People; they tempted him and proved him, though they saw his Works, and grieved him forty years together, and hardened their Hearts against all his dispensations; till at last after many Methods and varieties of Trials, he flung them off, and gave them up to utter ruin, that they might be no longer a People. Psal. 95. 9, 10.

And if any Nation under Heaven were the *Israel* of God, his *chosen People*, we of *England* have been the People; and who knows, how soon our Provocations may precipitate our ruin? how near our Destruction may be? and how soon an offended God may *un-Church* us, *un-people* us, and for our carnal and spiritual wantonness take away his *Grace*, and our *Peace* from us; and let it out to others that may bring forth the fruits of it. Math. 21. 41.

III. Nor in the *third* place are there wanting *Reasons*, why *Christ* should be thus exalted; and those, not to reckon them up all, both upon *God's* account and *ours*; the same Person being both *God* and *Man*, the Mediatour betwixt God and Men. 1 Tim. 2. 5.

1. First on *God's part*, even all three Persons of the blessed Trinity, *Father*, *Son*, and *holy Ghost*.

The *Father* was oblig'd to make a Declaration of his *Justice* and *Mercy*; so it follows in the *eleventh* verse, that every tongue should confess, that *Jesus Christ is Lord*, to the Glory of God the *Father*.

His *Justice* in not sparing his own Son, when he became our Surety, and *Justice* too in discharging our Surety after performance and satisfaction made, and in rewarding the Merits of his Son's Obedience and voluntary Submission.

Again, *Mercy* in giving up his Son for us; *Mercy* too, in accepting him from us, that through Faith in him all that he hath done and suffered, his whole *active* and *passive* Obedience might be imputed to us, for our Justification, as if we had done and suffered our selves; of which his Acceptance this *Exaltation* is a pregnant and comfortable Argument.

The *Son* was engag'd in honour to look for Reparation, for the proof and conviction of his *Deity*; whereupon the Apostle says, *he was declared to be the Son of God, with Power, by the Resurrection from the dead*. Rom. 1. 4.

In his humble state he convers'd upon Earth *incognito*; but now he made a publick Entry into his Glory. Nor were the Manifestations of his *Divinity* alone enough to vindicate his Reputation, which suffer'd and lay a bleeding in his low Estate, unless the *Manhood* also had gone shares in his *Exaltation*.

For it was not convenient for *him*, nor for *us*, neither for his Honour, nor for our Faith, that, after the Work of our Redemption was over, that very *Body* of his should have been thrown off and laid aside, as it might have been (after he had worn out our *Livery* in our service) in the wardrobe of the Grave, but that *that* should rise too, and ascend with him, and inseparably partake of all his Glories: the *Mediatorian* Office, for which that *Body* was taken, being still to continue, this being an Everlasting Covenant made in his Blood; so that had not he rose again, our Faith had been vain, we had been still in our sins, and the Gospel would have signified nothing, as the Apostle reasons it 1 Cor. 15. 17. Now for the continuation and application of his *Mediatorship*,

The *Holy Ghost* was to be employ'd; who, as he was concern'd in the *Incarnation*, overshadowing the blessed Womb, and sitting his *Body* for him; at his *Baptism*, witnessing to him; in his *Offices*, anointing him; at his *Temptation*, leading him into the Wilderness; and at his *Resurrection*, quickning him: so at his *Departure* was to supply his absence; to be the great Agent and Trustee for making out the Salvation wrought by Christ for us; the *Paraclete*, an *Advocate* in Prayers, a *Comforter* in distress, and a *Witness* of all saving Truth, and the *Sealer* of the Faithful, in the use of the Ordinances, *to the day of Redemption*.

Eph. 4. 30.

Matth. 12. 31.

So that who *blasphemes* him in his Ministrations, that wilfully opposes him in his Authority and Conduct, is excluded from Pardon, as sinning against the last method of Grace.

John 15. 7.

John 7. 39.

Now if *Christ* had not gone, the *Comforter* had not come, as he tells us; and this is that which was intimated in that saying, towards the beginning of Gospel-story; that the *Holy Ghost* was not yet, because that *Jesus* was not yet glorified; He was not, that is, he was not yet settled in the Administration of Church-affairs; nor was he to be, till *Christ* were exalted.

So then in respect of all three Persons, *Christ's Exaltation* was necessary.

2. Nor was it less necessary in respect of *Us*, and that upon a twofold account.

1. To publish and ascertain the satisfaction which *Christ* had made.

Rom. 4. 25.

Rom. 8. 33, 34.

For had not the debt been paid, the Prisoner had not been discharg'd; and had not that been, we should have been still in our sins and under guilty Apprehensions. As he died then for our sins, so he rose again for our Justification; and here the Apostle lays the stress of our Confidence; Who, says he, shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? It is *Christ* that died; yea rather, that is risen again.

Luke 24. 21.

So then that our Mediator is risen, ascended, and now sitting at God's right hand; these are great Assurances and Evidences of our Faith. Thus, as by his Humiliation satisfaction was made to God's Justice, so in his Exaltation is satisfaction given to our Faith. That appeased God's wrath, this allays our fears. We trusted, say the two poor Disciples, that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel; implying, that now he was dead, they little thinking he was risen again, it was now matter of distrust.

'Tis

'Tis true; Scripture in many places charges the whole account upon his *Death*, that one perfect Oblation upon the Altar of the *Cross*; but had he lain by it, the thing might still have lain under some question; but now it is put out of all doubt. Therefore though he *rose* by his own Power, 'tis said also *God raised him*, and to that purpose sent an Angel as his Officer to roll away the stone, to shew that his Justice was fully satisfied; and thereupon our Surety to be released. Acts 2. 24. 26.

Again, though the Battle was fought, and the Victory obtain'd by his *Agony* and *Passion*, yet the solemnity of his *Triumph*, and the Declaration of his *Conquest* was then to be celebrated, when *he went up on high*, and *led Captivity captive*, having spoiled Principalities and Powers. Eph. 4. 8. Col. 2. 15.

*Regnavit in ligno*, as the *Vulgar* reads it in the Psalms; he was a King upon the Tree, and was lifted up there in *Merit* too, as well as in *Place*; but the mock-Majesty of that *Crown of thorns* he wore then, which was so despicable to his Enemies, so deplorable to his Friends and Followers, so scandalous to the indifferent Beholders, and so painful to himself, was to be Exchanged for a Crown of Glory.

And so his *Merits* required; which is the other Consideration in our behalf.

2. To assert and make good his *Merit* to us, by effectual Applications; which now he does by the Royal Influences of his Grace, in the glorious Advancements of his exalted state. For being reconciled by his *Death*, Rom. 5. 10. how much more shall he by his *Resurrection* give us Life?

To enable him thus, as Head of the mystical Body, to derive spiritual Life and Vigour, *Pardon* and *Strength*, the *Assistances* of *Grace* and the *Assurances* of *Glory*, to all his lively Members, who are by Faith incorporated into him, it was necessary he should be exalted even in his Humanity, whereof all the sons of men are Partakers with him; both for the greater Certainty of our *Faith* in the Advancement and dignity of our *Nature*; and that in this glorious State, as the *Sympathy* of Na- Hebr. 1. 15. ture gives him a Fellow-feeling of all our wants and infirmities; so the *Dignity* and *Power*, which is given him, might furnish us with all manner of convenient Supplies and Advantages suitable to that great end, for which he had humbled himself, even the actual salvation of men.

Nor only this for *our* sakes, but for *his own* too; his *Merit*, as he was *God-m.an*, redounded to his own Advantage. Wherefore, by reason he humbled himself, *God also*, in Recompence of his Obedience, *highly exalted him*. Thus *S. Austin* descants upon it; that *Christ's Humility was the Merit of his Glory, and his Glory the Reward of his Humility*.

IV. I have done with the *Doctrinal* part: now to draw hence somewhat that may be *Practical* for our Use.

Shall I undertake hence to *prove*, in despite of *Jewish* unbelief, our Lord *Christ* to be the true *Messias*? This Conclusion *S. Peter* in his first Sermon at *Pentecost* fetches from Christ's Exaltation; Therefore, says he, *let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ*, Acts 2. 36. and our Saviour himself pleads it down along from *Moses* through all the Prophets, *Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his Glory?* Luke 24. 25; 26.

This



This would be very proper for me to do, were I before Auditors that needed a Confirmation of their Faith in the holy *Jesus*.

Shall I *confute* the sorry shifts and pitiful evasions of our late *Arrians*, who, from *Christ's* being exalted for his Humility, argue he was not God till his *Exaltation*, when he was made God; a God, say they, by *Office* and *Institution*, not so by *Nature* and *eternal Generation*.

But the Apostle himself has prevented that fraudulent Gloss, by saying *verse 6.* that he was *in the form of God*, before he took upon him the *form of a Servant*: where by *form* must be understood in both places alike a *substantial form*; so that if he were truly and really *Man*, which they do not deny, they must grant he was truly and really *God* too. And to take off all mistakes of Words, he adds, to his being *in the form of God*, his equality with God: *he thought it no robbery to be equal with God*. If then he were *equal with God*, he was *God*, coessential, coeternal, and, as to his Godhead, altogether coequal with the Father.

So that by his being *exalted*, cannot be meant, that he was then *deified* and made a God, which he was not before; but that he was *dignified* only in his *Person*, as it was now made up of the two *Natures*, the *Deity* which he had at first, and the *Humanity*, which he afterward assumed, and wherein he had humbled himself.

I heartily pray God, that that pernicious *Hereſie*, which by corrupt *Reason* slyly endeavours to undermine the ground-work of our *Faith*, and is so extremely prejudicial to *Christ's Honour*, by denying his *Deity*, and to all *Christian Comfort*, by laying aside his *Satisfaction*, may never get any footing, nor find any Countenance in the *English Church*. For if *Christ* be not *God* as well as *Man*; if he hath not *satisfied* divine Justice for us, which he could not have done, had not he been *God*; what is like to become of us all? how shall we *satisfie Justice*, or obtain *Mercy*? whence shall we fetch the reason of that hope which is in us?

1 Pet. 3. 15.

Shall I hence encourage you in your Christian course, as the Author to the *Hebrews* does in his 12th. Chapt. to *run with Patience the Race that is set before you*, looking unto *Jesus the Author and Finisher of your Faith*; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the *Cross*, despising the *shame*, and is set down at the right hand of the *Throne of God*? For what Spirit must it needs infuse into any *Christian Souldiers* brest, when he considers, that the *Captain of his Salvation* was made *perfect*, was consecrated to *Glory* by his *Sufferings*?

Hebr. 2. 10.

Look how suffering *Loyalty* erected its drooping head, when the glad tidings were brought of the *King's Return*? how the *Church* put on a new face, and took down her Harp from off the *Willows*, where it had hung all the late times of *Desolation*, to welcome home her gracious *Lord* and *Master* with songs of *Deliverance*. Such and more then such Thoughts of Joy must needs fill the Hearts of true *Believers* upon the Meditation of their *Saviour's* exalted state.

Shall I lay before you the *Example* of our blessed *Lord*? since all he did and suffered was *Exemplary* as well as *Meritorious*; and as his *Merit* is the ground of our *Faith*, so his *Example* ought to be the Pattern of our *Practice*; that they that take one without the other, do but divide *Christ*.

To

To this end, shall I again lead you over the Stages of his *Glory*? that, as he having died for our sins, *rose again, ascended, and sits at God's right hand*; so should we dying unto sin, rise again to newness of Life, and seek those things which are above, and have our Conversation in Heaven, where he is preparing Mansions of *Glory* for us, that he may set us in heavenly places with himself.

Rom. 6. 4.

Col. 3. 1.

Phil. 3. 20.

John 14. 2.

Particularly, shall I, as the Apostle here has done, from *Christ's Example* recommend unto you the Grace of *Humility*? out of which all these Glories of his had their rise, and which we are to look upon as the ground no less of all our *Hopes*, than of all *Christian Vertues*: for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him in *Glory*.

2 Tim. 2. 12.

Rom. 8. 17.

These all would be very genuine and natural *Deductions* from my *Text*: but I must wave them, and cast my eye upon a nearer Instance, where as I see the *Royalities* of our Saviour represented, so his *twofold Estate* has been to the life exprelled. For having spoken of *Christ God and Man humbled first and then highly exalted*; whom can I more fitly apply it to then (to speak it with reverence) to the God-man before me, the *Son of Man*, whom God hath by wonderful Providences made so strong for himself; and to whom, next to himself and his *Christ*, he has obliged our Venerations.

Psal. 80. 17.

And certainly as 'tis the most *dutiful*, so I am perswaded, it is the most *effectual* way of applying to *Majesty*, as the Apostle exhorts us to do, in *Prayers and Supplications and Intercessions*.

1 Tim. 2. 1.

Let me therefore intreat you once more to joyn with me in Prayer,

That, as it pleased God to make our gracious Sovereign in the fore-part of his Life conformable to his own Son by sufferings, and afterwards highly exalted him, bringing him back in Peace and Honour to the Throne and Dignity of his Fathers; so he would in all spiritual Graces and Vertues also make him like to the only begotten; and after a long and happy Reign here on Earth, Crown those Graces with immortal Glories in his heavenly Kingdom.

That God having made him the Mediator of our Peace, and the Healer of our Breaches, we and all his Subjects, as he came amongst us the Desire of Nations; so we may ever look upon him as the Lord Ascendent of all our Interests and Affections, the Light of our eyes and the Breath of our nostrils.

That as God has set him, next under Christ, the Head of the Brittish Churches, he may govern as the holy Jesus does, and by his Authority and Example may recommend that Faith, whereof he is the Defender; and that by the vigorous and kindly Influences of his personal Graces and Regal Indowments, all the Members of this great Body may be held together in the Unity of the same spirit, in the bond of Peace.

That there may never arise any unhappy occasion which may beget a misunderstanding betwixt Him and his People, but that a good correspondence may constantly be maintain'd by the reciprocal intercourses of Grace on His side, and Duty on theirs.

That God would keep fast to him the Hearts of His Friends, and give him the Necks of his Enemies, that they may neither have the Power nor the Will to hurt Him; and that as His Adversaries, after they had protested and covenanted and ingag'd against Him, were by a miraculous Defeat found liars in their Opposition, so they may never be found liars in their Subjection, but may in all sincerity obey Him.

*That God would blast the designs of all those, that do but in their thoughts rise up against the Lords Anointed.*

*That Peace may still dwell in our Land, and there may be no Complaining in our Streets; and that, instead of charging foolishly our Mis-carriages upon God's Ordinance, we would rather every one lay his hand upon his own Heart, and say, I, I am he that have disturbed our Israel, that have frustrated the Designs, and obstructed the Blessings of the Restauration.*

*That God would grant us his Grace to give him the honour of his Judgments, and (which are more dreadful) of his Mercies in the midst of us, and to amend our sinful lives, that his Blessings may be upon his King, and upon us his People.*

*That he would establish Him, whom he hath so highly exalted, and make him a happy Instrument in his hand of those Blessings to us and to our Posterity after us; and that there may never be wanting of that Royal Stock a man to sway the Scepter of these Nations, till Shiloh come.*

*Let us close all with that Wish, wherewith the Apostle concludes his former Epistle to the Corinthians, applying that, which he says of our Lord Jesus Christ, to his Vicegerent our dear and dread Sovereign; If any man love him not, whosoever is disaffected to him, to his Person or Government, let him be Anathema Maranatha.*

*Now to the holy Jesus, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, together with the Father and blessed Spirit, be ascribed all Honour and Glory. Amen.*



S I X  
SERMONS

U P O N

Particular Subjects;

W H E R E O F

*Three* upon the three first Beatitudes.

V I Z.

The First Beatitude ; or *The Blessedness of the Poor in Spirit.*

The Second Beatitude ; or *The Blessedness of those that Mourn.*

The Third Beatitude ; or *The Blessedness of the Meek.*

The other *Three* by way of Historical Descant.

V I Z.

*Abraham* Sacrificing his Son ; or *The Triumphs of Faith.*

The Gathering of Manna ; or *Providence Justified.*

*Nadab* offering strange Fire ; or *Schism Impleaded.*

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By ADAM LITTLETON D. D.

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L O N D O N,

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# The First Beatitude; or *The Blessedness of the Poor in Spirit.*

A Sermon Preached at S. Peters Westminster,  
Octob. 18. 1674.

Matth. V. iii.

*Blessed are the Poor in Spirit ; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*



**C**HRIST, ye know, came impowered with three Offices; as a *Priest* to open the way into the Holy of Holies, by rending the Vail of his Flesh; as a *Prophet*, to shew us the way that leads to Heaven; and as a *King*, to guide us in it, to go before us: His very *Death*, which was the Consummation of all, as it was the Payment of our Ransom, an Atonement for sin, (this an act of his *Priesthood*) so it was also a Confirmation of his Doctrine, as he was the great *Prophet*, and the highest Recommendation of his Example, as to his *Kingly* Office; since *Bene facere & male audire Regium est*; To be ill treated for well-doing is King-like, says he; and so Innocence and Patience together are most becoming a Christian.

Upon this *threefold* account it is, that he is called the *Way* and the *Truth* and the *Life*; the *Way* in his *Example*, the *Truth* in his *Doctrine*, and the *Life* in his *Merit* and *Satisfaction*. John 14. 6.

Hence we learn the true nature of *Faith*, to entertain him in all his Capacities; as *Prophet* and *King* as well as *Priest*, to obey his *Doctrine*, and follow his *Example*; otherwise we shall have but little reason to rely on his *Merit*.

After his Baptism, *Chap. 3.* and Temptation, *Chap. 4.* here in this *fifth Chapter* he sets upon his *Prophetick* Office; he goes up into a *Mountain*, that with the same Advantages, and in the same Manner, as the *Law* was deliver'd, so the *Gospel* might be promulgated, of which this *Sermon on the Mount* is a fair Abstract and compendious Abridgment.

And first, according to the Method of *Moral Philosophy*, he treats of the *End* of human Actions, *Beatitude* or Happiness; *Vitam que faciunt beatorem*; that which every one designs in all that he does, the ultimate end of all our Desires and Endeavours; and yet that, in which most People of the World are generally mistaken, as if Nature had by  
implanting



implanting that Desire only deluded Mankind, and had contrived our Unhappiness by putting us upon restless Pursuits of an unattainable Happiness.

But it is not so; *Deus & Natura nihil agunt frustra*. The very *Philosopher* by this Argument proves there is such a thing, because all men naturally desire it.

Here we have a plain path-way chalk'd out to us; and if we go no further then this first step, and be, as *Christ* was in this respect, *poor in Spirit*, we shall be sure to find it. *Blessed are the poor in Spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

In which words we have two things to be consider'd.

1. A *Grace* commended; *Poverty of Spirit*.
2. A *Reward* assigned; *Blessedness* at present; and for the future, the possession of a Kingdom, *the Kingdom of Heaven*.

Let me go over the Words in a short familiar *Paraphrase*. They are

*Blessed,*] They are in a happy and blessed Condition, as to their own Satisfaction and Contentment; and even in the Esteem and Opinion of all others. They want nothing that good is, and are troubled with no ill.

They have Advantages and Blessings of all kinds and degrees; for so generally they define Blessedness, *Cumulus bonorum*, an abundance of all good things to supply all Wants, to satisfy all Desires; so the *Hebrew* language expresses it in the *Plural* form *אשר* *blessednesses*.

*The poor in Spirit,*] Those who are so in their own conceit, who have humble and lowly thoughts of themselves, who are of meek *Understandings*, governable *Wills*, and quiet *Affections*, that are easily satisfied; who in their *Behaviour* and *Conversation*, whatever their Condition may be in the World, rank themselves among those of low degree, and in their *Services* to God and their *Sufferings* for him or by him, are so far from ascribing any thing to themselves, that they can readily and cheerfully resign up all their Interests into his hand, and can be content to be poor for his sake; and if God should cast them into *Poverty*, would willingly imbrace it as the more desirable.

For that we are not to except even *outward Poverty* from a right in this blessedness, appears by *S. Luke*, who thus recites it, *Blessed are the poor; that are* at least prepared in mind to part with all, contented to be poor if God sees fit, and resolv'd to leave all and follow him, when Occasion requires.

*For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*] Theirs by Right, and at last by Possession; or *αὐτῶν*, of them; it is made up of those that are such. Now this *Kingdom of Heaven*, or *Kingdom of God*, as *S. Luke* has it, is taken in two senses.

1. For the *Kingdom of Grace*, the Gospel-state: to such belongs the *Gospel*, according to that, which was one of the Marks of the *Messias* his being come, *οἱ πτωχοὶ ἐπαγγελίσονται*, the poor receive the Gospel; These are true Members of the Church, right genuin *Christians*.

2. For the *Kingdom of Glory*; they are members of the *Militant Church* here, and will be of the *Triumphant* hereafter.

Now a *Kingdom*, and that of *Heaven*, oppos'd to *Poverty*, shews and evinces their *Blessedness*, in the one sense by the Assistance of *Grace*, in the other by the Assurance of *Glory*.

From

From the Words thus explained we gather this *Observation* ;

That *Those who are poor in Spirit*, that is, that are humble and lowly-minded, are of a right Gospel-temper, as that which fits them for God's Kingdom. Or,

That *Poverty of Spirit* is a sure Character of a gracious Christian and a blessed Saint, as that which inflates them in Grace, and fits them for Glory.

Of which our Saviour elsewhere makes a *Child* the Embleme, telling us, that *he that humbles himself as one of them, shall be greatest*, that is, have the highest place, in the Kingdom of Heaven, *Matth. 18. 4.* and that without the Child-like quality there is no coming thither.

For our clearer proceeding, *first*, I shall recount some Notes or Marks of this Grace. *Secondly*, By some arguments prove the Proposition; and in the last place apply to our selves.

I. The Marks by which we are to know and discern this gracious Temper, this *Poverty of Spirit*.

In general; He that is *Poor in Spirit*, is such an one as entertains mean low Thoughts of himself in all his Concerns: He knows, what he is or has is but little, and yet he is very well content with that Portion, God's goodness has bestow'd upon him, and cheerfully imployes his Talent, whatever it is, to the givers Praise and others Benefit, and walks humbly and thankfully with his God: *humbly*, that his Lot is not so much as others have, and yet *thankfully*, that it is more then he deserves; and this both as to his outward fortunes and as to his inward graces. In particular;

1. For his *Understanding*: he submits his Reason to the Rule of Faith, squares his Conceptions of sacred Truths by that *Analogy*, will not be wiser then *Scripture*, nor advance his own reason before Gods. Rom. 12. 6.

He knows there are many things, which human Reason can give no account of, but Angels may; many of which Men and Angels cannot, yet God can; for we know nothing of Nature it self, and are at a loss in ordinary Occurrences; how much more must natural Reason be at a stand in things Supernatural and the *Mysteries of Faith*?

He resolves therefore, that God does many things above Reason, but none against it, as being himself the *Supream Reason*; who, as he is of an uncontrollable Will, so he is of an unbounded Power, and of an immense Understanding; in all his Ways past finding out. Rom. 11. 33.

He pulls down the strong holds of his own Imaginations, and surrenders them to divine Authority. 2 Cor. 10. 4.

He will not lean too much upon his own Judgment, nor govern himself by his own private Sentiments; fearing, least if he should trust too much to himself, he might, according to an Italian Proverb, have a fool to his Master.

He is sure that the wittiest *Atheists* are but *Scripture-fools*, and had rather have a dram of sanctified Reason, then never so much of prophane Disputacity. Psal. 14. 1, &c.

2. For his *Will*; As his Reason yields to Faith, so his Will stoops to Reason; or rather submits herself to the Conduct of Grace: for such a guide is sanctified Reason.

His

His *Will* must needs humbly comply with God's, because his *Reason* does so; for not only the Rule of *Grace*, but the Order of *Nature* herself has taught him, that the *Will* being a *blind Power*, is to follow and not go before its Guide.

Wherefore he finds all reason, the *Will* should submit in holy *Duties*, as the *Reason* doth in mysterious *Truths*. For even in common *naturals*, This, as I said, is to seek and is fain to yield; how much more ought the *Will* to yield in sacred *Morals*?

To make short; *Humility* is a Grace mainly seated in the *Will*: Nothing so sure an indication of *Pride*, as a refractory, stubborn, and wilful Disposition.

This makes men indocil and ungovernable. They will not be governed, they will not be taught, because they will not.

When the *Will* has thus invaded the throne of Reason, the Man is rendered incapable of Instruction, in that his reason is rendered useless to him and unserviceable.

It follows then by natural Consequence and the rule of Contraries, that *the humble, God will teach his ways*; forasmuch as they are obedient and willing, and so capable of being taught.

Phil. 2. 9.

3. For his *Affections*: Those are the *Handmaids of the Will*; and look up to her as the eyes of the Handmaid to her Mistress. Where she is truly humble, they all go in her Livery.

He knows not what *anger* or discontent means; for he is *content* with every thing, with any thing, with nothing. He is displeas'd with nothing, and as little as nothing will please him. His desires are low, and easily satisfied with mean things and little of them.

*Vivitur exiguo melius*; Men live happiest with a little, is a sure *Maxim* with him, that has as much of *ease* as *truth* in it. They live best, that live with least ado; and many times the greatest satisfactions are to be met with in the smallest Possessions.

*Natura paucis contenta*, Nature is content with a little, Grace with less; and he finds it better so.

He aspires not to things too high for him, nor is ever troubled at *Disappointment*; for it is impossible for him, that looks after nothing, to be disappointed.

*Ambition* is a stranger to his thoughts; nor does he think any thing here below worth the while. He possesses his *Soul*, and that is more to him, than if he had all the World at command.

He *envies* none their Happiness, because he has enough of his own; so much, that he can afford his *pity* to troublesome greatness.

He is *in equilibrio*, in a perfect Poise, and neither *hopes* for better, nor *fears* worse; but is *content* with what is, and is secure of his Content.

Rom. 12. 16.

4. For his *Conversation*; He is one of the *συναπαυόμενοι*, that is carried down with the stream and eddy about him; be his own place and station never so high, he himself, to be sure, will be low in his own esteem; and therefore he *condescends* to those of lower degree, nay, and is so low in his Condescension as to think there is none lower than himself.

You



You cannot do him an *Injury* if you would; he interprets every thing well, and is as thankful for *Discourtesies* as if they were real *Favours*, and they prove so to him; for he makes the best use of them; Unkindnesses and affronts do but make him the humbler still, *that is*, the better man, and are so far from discouraging, that they improve his Graces.

He is very serviceable to *Community*, though he have nothing but *blows* for his labour; both in his *burdens* and usage *Jument*-like, and is well paid with this consideration, that he serves a *gracious Master* the while, who will amply Reward him at last.

Where it is in his power to do good, he does it frankly for *God's sake*, and your Acceptance obliges him, as if you had done him the kindness.

As to God, he's sensible his *sin*s outweigh his *services*, and glad he is to throw his Humility in for a *Sacrament*, for an advantage of Weight, to help to even the Scales.

Further; for this is but as to his *Person* yet; in his *Concerns* and *Carriage*.

1. In his *secular Interests*: His *Wealth*, *Honour*, *Power*, and all other outward Advantages, he is so far from being proud of, that they weigh him down into a more profound Humility. They are *burdens*, he feels, though honourable, and bow as well as adorn his back. The higher his place is in the World, to be sure the more lowly you shall find him in his mind.

*Beauty*, *Strength*, and other such like bodily Accomplishments he looks upon, that it is below the Reason of men to pride in; for these are things belong to the *brutish* part, and he is convinced, that the *Soul* is the man.

And for the Goods of *Fortune*, he takes them to be below a Wife-man's care, any further then to use them well, *that is*, to God's Glory and others good.

So that in short, whether in *Riches* or *Poverty*, he is still humble and thankful, always the same.

*Riches* he can so far indure, as they are Instruments and Advantages of doing others good. *Poverty* though, is his beloved, which gives him less trouble here, and produces a less account for hereafter; besides that it is so near allied to that Grace he is so much in love with, that he would not part with it for a thousand Worlds, his *poverty of Spirit*.

2. Much less thinks he it any way becoming a *Christian* to grow proud of his *Gifts* and *Graces*.

*Pride* is the very *Canker* of graces and parts: He that has them, and is proud of them, either but seems to have them, or else will not have them long.

*Humility* is the fundamental Grace: He that has not that, may justly suspect himself for all the rest.

Wherefore for these blessed Adornments of his *Mind*, he does with them, as we use to do with rich *Caskets* and *Cabinets*, when we have occasion to have them carried abroad, to cover them with Canvas or Mattresses, &c. he throws over his Humility: he takes no notice of them himself, and is sorry and troubled, when he finds that any one else does.

He has them for *use* and not for *shew*, and is jealous, if they should appear, he should loose them, like rich *Spirits*, which, thrown into the air, evaporate and vanish away.

3. In his *Services* to God. Could he bring any Honour to God, any Advantage to his Glory, I confess this consideration might go near to tempt him to a kind of Pride; but yet he considers it is not he that does it, he's but a sorry *Instrument* in God's hand, and at best but an *unprofitable Servant*.  
 Luke 17. 10.

He would willingly sacrifice his All, to his Service; but alas! this is but to give God his own again, and where's the Merit or the Boast of such service?

In fine, when he has serv'd God, what he can, all his life time; he returns him all the *Glory*, and takes none to himself; as being well aware, that he that does any thing for his own Praise, *he has his Reward*; and he had rather expect his, then take it up aforehand here.  
 Mat. 6. 2, 5, 16.

4. In his *Sufferings* for God: He rejoices that he is *counted Worthy*, and takes it for an honour to be tried; yet when he comes to weigh these *Sufferings* of his, and ballance them with the *Reward*, he finds they are but *light afflictions* to that *כבד*, that heavy *Weight of Glory*. So that what made him willing to suffer at first, makes him as willing to suffer on; *to wit*, the greatness of the Recompence and his own Unworthiness; the sense of which humbles him more then all his Sufferings can.  
 Acts 5. 41.  
 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Nay, when he suffers by the hand of God, whether for *Chastisement of sin*, or *Exercise of Grace*, he humbly submits to God's pleasure. For if we submit to our natural Parents, who many times (*men* as they are) chasten us for their own pleasure, and yet we pay them Reverence; how much more, reasons he with the *Apostle*, ought we to *be in subjection to the Father of Spirits, and Live?* since all his Dispensations, he is sure, are in the end design'd for his good.  
 Hebr. 12. 9.

Let him smite me, says he, I am confident, he will not forget his *Love* as a *Father*; and I am resolv'd, I will not forget my *Duty* as a *Child*: *yea, though he kill me, yet will I trust in him*.  
 Job 13. 15.

He takes Comfort by the *Rod* as well as by the *Staff*; because the rod never goes without the staff: for where God afflicts, he usually supports too.

He is *bruis'd* already by his own Humility, and he knows God will not *break* him; and the utmost Extremity, which a good God thinks fit to use, serves only to make him more humble, *that is*, more gracious.  
 Mat. 12. 20.

We have done with the *Characters*, wherein we have spent the more time, as taking it for the most useful part, expressing our Duty by way of Example. We shall be the shorter in the rest.

II. We come next to the *Probation* of the Point, that this *Poverty of Spirit is the right Gospel-temper*, as that which evidences *Grace*, and prepares for *Glory*. Which may be made good by such *Arguments* as these.

I. That

1. That this Poverty of Spirit is the very Master-Principle of Christianity.

2. That It is this which makes us conformable to our blessed Lord.

3. That This is not only it self a Grace, but makes us capable and receptive of more and other Graces.

4. That Reason and Justice require, that this Grace should be rewarded with Glory.

And these all of them are such Truths, as would each of them take up more time, then we can allow to them altogether. I have promised brevity, and shall but touch at them.

1. This Poverty of Spirit is the very Principle and Ground-work of Christianity, and therefore is here set down first in the Catalogue of those things which are to qualify us for Blessedness.

So Self-denial, which is much at one, is the first Lesson to be learnt, when we become Christians. *Whoever will come after me (saith Mark 8. 34. Christ) let him deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow me.*

And elsewhere he tells us, *He that hates not Father and Mother, &c. Luke 14. 26. cannot be my disciple.* How? hate them? this is *durus sermo*. Some of these are *Charitates naturales*, and Religion as well as Nature obliges us to love them. Others are such necessities and conveniences of Life, that we cannot be without them.

1. We are not so to love them as to prefer them. To hate is to love less; as in another place he says, *He that loves them more than me, is not worthy of me.* Matth. 10. 37.

2. We are upon Occasion, if Christ and his Gospel call for it, actually to part with them, or at least to be so inclin'd and dispos'd, as if there should be occasion, to forsake them all.

2. In this we are made conformable to Christ, who denied himself, stript himself of all his Glory he had with the Father, and appear'd in a poor and mean Condition throughout all the history of his Birth, his Life, his Death, from Cratch to Cross.

Wherefore in the *Apostles Creed*, immediately after his Birth, his Suffering is brought in, as if his whole Life had been nothing else.

And if we mean to reign with him, we must suffer with him; which 2 Tim. 2. 12. S. Paul calls the filling up of his Sufferings; not that his Sufferings were Col. 1. 24. not full and sufficient of themselves, but we must *ἀνταναπληρῶν* fill them up on our side by our sufferings.

And therefore the Church uses the Ceremony of initiating her Gremials with the Sign of the Cross, to list us in his Service; the Cross being a Badge of a suffering condition.

3. This, by emptying us of our selves, makes us receptive of Grace. *Intus existens prohibet aliunde adveniēns.* Pride keeps out Grace: When a man is full of himself, God's Spirit cannot find room to enter.

Mountains and Hills are generally barren, the Rain and fructifying Showrs falling off and running down from them as fast as they come on; whilst the lower Grounds that soak in the early and the later rain, and the Valleys, that are water'd with Rivers, are most fruitful.



The very same *Vessel*, as *Clavius*, a learned, though a plain *Mathematician*, hath demonstrated, has a greater capacity and holds more at the foot of a Hill, then at the top: a true *Hieroglyphick* of Humility, that God giveth grace to the humble.

1 Pet. 5.5.

4. The Justice of God and common Reason seems to require it, that those who, for his sake, or in his service, have been poor and mean here, should be rewarded with Heavenly Riches and Glories hereafter.

Luke 16. 25.

Thus *Abraham* argues the case with the Rich man; Son, Remember thou hast had thy good things in thy life time, and Lazarus his evil things; now he is comforted and thou art tormented.

A sad *Memento* to a dying man, that has liv'd in pride and pleasure, spent his time and his portion too in riot and Vanity, and now sees all his Joys past, all his Comforts gone, and has no prospect of any Happiness or Hope in the other World, whither he is going. Which may be a *Memento* to the living too. For it is as much, as if Father *Abraham* had turn'd back to this World, and had said to us, Sons, remember, have a care. There is no injoying of your carnal Pleasures and worldly Satisfaction in your life time, and then looking for heavenly Joys afterward. But if you receive your evil things there, as he did, you shall be comforted here, as he is.

III. In the last place, to gather hence something for our Use. And

1. To Inform us; Religion is no such dumpish melancholy thing, as some People take it for, notwithstanding this *Poverty of Spirit*; for by this is not meant Pusillanimity and mean Spiritdness. For tell me,

What greater Argument can there be for Bravery of Mind, what clearer Evidence for Gallantry of Spirit, then to subdue ones Reason? to govern ones Will? to master ones Affections? to live above the World and the things of the World? to be free and unconcerned, when all about him are in trouble and hurly burly? to be Master of himself and his Fortunes, and not to have his Mind enslaved to his Condition?

What more cheerful and sanguin, then always to be pleas'd and in good humour?

What, in a word, more Generous or Manly, indeed more Divine and Heaven-like, then to be out of the reach of Care, and beyond all earthly Considerations?

These, these are the proper Effects and natural Issues of this *Poverty of Spirit*.

2. To Confute a Popish vanity, who mistake their Vow of Poverty for this *Poverty of Spirit*, which possibly too is no better kept then some other Vows they make. For we see likely all their Orders grow rich, wherever they set foot.

Add to this, that there may be more Pride in a wilful Poverty, then in great Patrimonies. There may be Pride even in Rags, as well as in Purple and gay Cloathing; and such Pride, as it is no less conspicuous, so 'tis far more odious of the two.

It was a notable Reparty, that *Aristippus* gave the Cynick, who in his patcht Coat and beggerly Array fell a trampling on the jolly Philosophers bravery; see, says he, how I tread his Pride under my feet! I, says the other, sed majore fastu, but with a greater pride of thy own.

Besides, as a man may be *poor*, and yet *proud*; so many good men have been *rich*, and yet *humble*. Our Saviour, when he commends *Poverty*, does not condemn *Wealth*. It is the *Poverty of Spirit* Christ looks for; and that, if it be more rare in the *Rich* and the *Great*, it is however more commendable.

3. To *Reprove* those that are Masterful, will have their own Reasons and wills pass, indeed their Humours and Interests to prevail in spite of all Government; and will go to Heaven it self their own way. And I wish there were not some, that fancy themselves the best sort of *Christians*, who are of this temper.

*Away!* Is this *Poverty of Spirit*, to despise Government, to resist Authority, to contend with the Priest, to overthrow all order, to make your selves wiser then *Church* and *State*, and not to care what becomes of the World, so you may have your will?

*Alas!* this is very far from a Gospel-temper, from a Christian-like disposition.

What do they talk of Mysteries and sublime Points of Faith, of *Justification*, *Election*, *Predestination*, &c. as if they were got to the top of Religion, when God knows they are not arrived yet at the very ground-fill of it, nor learnt the very A B C of Christianity? Surely they mistake their way to Heaven, and are out at the very first step, who think to get thither without Humility and this blessed *Poverty of Spirit*.

I shall close all with some *Cautions* against *Pride*, whether carnal or spiritual, as the opposite Vice and enemy to this *Grace*.

First in general, all *Pride*: take notice it is commonly 1. The *Effect of Ignorance*; which appears in that those are most apt to be proud, who have least reason for it, and love themselves without a Rival. The *Apostle* tells us of *Zeal without Knowledge*. Ignorant people are likely most zealous, most proud; *Lyodicea*-like, *Rev.* 3. 17. she said, she was *rich and increas'd with Goods, and had need of nothing; not knowing that she was wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.* Rom. 10. 2.

2. It is *Absurd and ridiculous*; *Quid superbis de alienis?* to be proud of what is none of his own.

*Lucian* tells us a story of the *Ass*, that carried the *Syrian Goddess* about the Country in *Procession*, who when the People flock'd about in the streets and fields, as she pass'd, to pay their Devotions to her (as in *Popish* Countries to the *Hof*); the simple *Ass* taking all this honour done to himself, grew so insolent, that the Driver could not govern him, but was fain with a good Cudgel to reduce him to his former Understanding, and remind him of his Duty again.

Little better or wiser then this silly Creature, are those, upon whom God has for his own Glory bestow'd *Wit* and *Wealth* and other Advantages, and they abuse and pervert them to their own praise. *Quid habes quod non acceperas?* What hast thou, that thou didst not receive? is a sufficient check to *Pride*. 1 Cor 4. 7.

3. 'Tis *Odious* to God and Man; whilst every one, as it is with *Favourites* in Princes Courts, seeks to pull him down, who strives most to advance himself; and a man by taking more then his Due, looses even what his Due is.

And God for his part *armatus* sets himself in Battle-array against the *Proud*, as his open declared Enemies; whereas *Humility* is amiable and lovely, and obliges every body to respect it. James 4. 6.

4. It

4. It is *Dangerous* to a mans own self, in that 1. It tempts a jealous God to call for his Gifts back again. 2. It naturally decays parts and graces, by making those that have them careless and secure. 3. It brings a tremendous Account after it : The more thou hast, the worse it will be, if thou hast not well used it; and therefore, if thou hast more then others have, it rather engages thee to be more careful and *humble*.

In *particular*; for *Carnal Pride*; that is *Irrational*, below the dignity of man to take Pride in such things, the Excellence of whose nature lies in things of another kind; and for *spiritual Pride*, besides those formention'd Arguments, it is in a word a *Luciferian* sin; that which, as it threw the Angels out of Heaven, so will most certainly keep Men out; whereas on the contrary, the *humble* and *poor in spirit* have not only a Promise, but a present Tenure of Heaven; *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs IS the Kingdom of Heaven.*

To which God of his Mercy by his Grace bring us all, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*



## The Second Beatitude; or *The Blessedness of those that Mourn.*

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* in the Lent-course, *March 8. 167 $\frac{5}{6}$ .*

Matth. V. iv.

*Blessed are they that Mourn; for they shall be Comforted.*



**T**HAT *Blessedness* or *Felicity* is the *End* of Human actions, that which every man proposes to himself and drives at in all his designs and affairs; That most men of the World are apt to be mistaken in the *Means* which are to bring them to this *End*, nay, in the *End* it self; some placing it in one thing, some in another, as namely in *Riches*, *Honours*, *Pleasures*, and the like; That the very Schools of *Philosophers*, who were reputed the *Wise*st of men, were so disagreeing about this point, that there were no less then several scores of different *Opinions* among them concerning the *Summum bonum* or Chiefest good, as *Varro* a learned *Roman* tells us; and That our blessed Lord and Saviour, being the great Restorer of Nature and Reformer of Laws, makes it his first business in this *Sermon* of his upon the *Mount*, in eight distinct *Aphorisms* to state the account of *Happiness* aright, far above what had been the *Vulgar* apprehension or ordinary *Philosophy*: These are things so generally known, that I need not detain you with any long *Preamble*.

Only to make out the *Connexion* of this *Beatitude* with the other two, which stand on each side of it, these being the first *Three* of the *Eight*; let me observe to you, that whereas most men of earthly and sensual principles place *Happiness* in the *abundance* of all outward good things, and in the pursuit and satisfaction of their Lusts, so as to live in *pleasure* and *pride*; Christ quite contrary, to shew that *Felicity* is not to be had in things without us, fixes it upon another bottom, even the denial and want of all these, and pronounces those, whom *Worldlings* and *Voluptuaries* account the most miserable, to be the alone *Blessed* ones; such as are the *Poor*, the *Mourners*, and the *Meek*.

Another thing we may well observe, how the *Rewards* are appropriated to the several *Graces*; the *Kingdom of Heaven*, that inestimable Treasure of Wealth and Glory, to the *Poor*; the *Inheritance of the Earth*, long Life and Prosperity, to the *Meek*, who seem to be most liable

ble to Injury and Violence ; and *Comfort* here to those, who appear most to want it, to the *Mourners*.

S. *Luke* reckons but *Four* of these *Graces* in all, which S. *Ambrose* refers to the *four Cardinal Vertues*, whereof this of *Mourning* he assigns to *Prudence*, that the Christian upon a just Estimate of things passes right Judgment upon them, and takes those things for Subjects of his *Mourning*, which others foolishly make the Objects of their Joy.

I shall crave leave *first* to explain the Words.

*They that Mourn.*] That find no true *Content* in any thing here below, meet with no solid *satisfaction* in carnal Joys and *Pleasures*, but aspire to *spiritual* Delights ; That heartily deplore their own *sinful* and, through that, *vile* and *miserable* Condition ; That bewail their *natural* Defects and *personal* Deficiencies, Mourn for their want of *Righteousness*, and earnestly beg Grace of God in Christ to pardon them, to strengthen them ; and that weep over their *original* Corruption, their *actual* Defilements, and their failings in their very *best* Performances, and the imperfections of their even *regenerate* Estate.

Nor confine they their sad *Resentments* to themselves and their own concerns, but lament the *Vanities* and *Miseries* of human Life ; when they see what pains most take to render themselves to all Eternity *fools* and *wretches* : particularly in compassion to those *Societies*, of which Providence has made them members, take to heart and grieve for *Natural* sins and *Judgments*. These are

Psal. 126. 6.

*Blessed*] What ever the World may think, what opinion soever others may have of them, they are in a happy Estate and Condition even at present, as having the *seed* of a spiritual life in them ; *They go forth weeping*, carrying their *precious seed* with them, and fitting themselves for the growth of Grace : This here ; Much more hereafter, when *they shall return with joy*, bringing their *sheaves* along with them, an ample Harvest of comfort.

*For they shall be Comforted.*] Blest Souls ! they have not only the present Consolation of the *Spirit* the *Comforter*, even a Hundredfold in this Life ; but have *large* and *fair* and *sure* Expectations of an everlasting Joy, for which they have prepared themselves, to have as a true *Relish*, so a vast *Capacity* ; neither of which is to be found in the *Voluptuary*.

This then may be our *Observation*, which is but a *Paraphrase* upon the Text.

*Those that mourn and sorrow according to God in this Life, are assured of great returns of Comfort in the next, of which they have considerable Earnests and Pledges even whilst they are here.* Or, to be shorter ;

*Godly sorrow is the Blessed way to Comfort.*

Of which, that we may treat Methodically, we shall

*First*, set down the *Characters* of this *mourning* Temper, which we shall draw from the *Occasions* and *Instances* ; and those *Characters* (as being Descriptions of the *Grace* here recommended) will serve for *Directions* of the Duty, inasmuch as *Examples* have more of Beauty and Energy, more of Life and Prevalence in them, then down-right *Precepts* have.

Secondly, we shall lay down some *Reasons* and *Arguments* for the Confirmation of the Point; and these will be *Proofs* of the Reward, and consequently *Motives* and *Incouragements* to the Duty.

Thirdly, in the last place we shall gather somewhat for our more particular use by way of *Application*, and close with some *Cautions* against carnal Joy, the contrary to this *Grace*; which will be the removal of those *Impediments*, that would hinder us in undertaking or performing this *Duty*, and by that means frustrate our expectation of the *Reward*.

1. The *Characters* of this *Mourner* taken from the *Occasions*.

In general; He meets with nothing in the greater World, nothing in Himself to take pleasure in. There by *Solomon's* experience is nothing but *Vanity* and *Vexation*; Here by his own he finds nothing but *Sin* and *Misery*. Ecc. 2. 26.

First he begins with *himself* and his own Concerns. He mourns over his own *sins*, and bewails his *wants*.

As to his *sins*;

1. *Original Concupiscence*, the Source of all the rest; he would pump out the corruption of his Heart, out at his Eyes. He finds all his Faculties overspread with a *Leprosie* of sin, and according to the *Levitical* law he withdraws from Company, bemoans himself in his privacy, and cries, *Unclean, Unclean!* Lev. 13. 45.

He deplores the darkness of his *Understanding*, as those who have lost their sight; the pravity and corruption of his *Will*, and the disorder of his *Afections*.

He dares not think these *Excuses* for his miscarriages, nor does he look upon them only as meer *Infelicities*, but resents them the main *Troubles* and *Vexations* of his soul, and takes them to be the *Exercises* of his *Grace*, and that without striving to subdue these *natural* disadvantages, he shall not be vouchsafed the supply of *Spiritual* aids, and that these are design'd to strangle and combat with those, as the house of *David* with the house of *Saul*. 2 Sam. 3. 1.

2. His *Actual sins*. He weeps for his *Commissions*; nor does he omit his *Omissions*.

He examines his *Thoughts*, calls his *Words* to account, and weighs his *Actions* in the ballance of the *Sanctuary*; where he finds them all too light, too like himself (as the *Psalmist* gives in the account of all men) *lighter than Vanity* it self; and therefore adds his tears into the weight. Psal. 62. 9.

The sight of his deplorable Condition provokes his sighs and groans; and he roars for the very disquietness of his heart.

His sins ly like an insupportable *burthen* upon his Mind, *too heavy* for him to bear, and lay load to his pensive Meditations. Psal. 38. 4.

He follows *S. James's* advice, *James* 4. 8, 9, 10. he *cleanses his hands*, (sinner as he is) and *purifies his heart*, *afflicts himself*, *mourns and weeps*, *turns his laughter into mourning*, and *his joy into heaviness*, and *humbles himself in the sight of the Lord*, that he may in his due time *lift him up*.

His very bones are broken, and the Cure it self in setting of bones is painful, breeds smart and anguish, and causes his groans.

He passes Sentence upon himself at his own Bar, that he may escape God's doom, and puts it in Execution by a sharp Revenge upon himself.



*His soul melteth* for heaviness, *Psal.* 119.28. and as he goes on there, he desires to be *strengthened according to God's word.*

*Hab.* 1.13.

3. *His Failings in his best Actions.* He knows that, take him at best, he cannot be justified in God's sight, who is of *purser eyes* then to behold the least iniquity with any approbation.

He finds he has nothing in himself to joy or take delight in; and thereupon dreads to think, how divine Justice may look upon him, who sees so much reason to detest himself.

Should God be merciful to his *sins*, and pass them by, and only be strict in taking notice of his very *Prayers* and other religious *Duties*, he should not be able to stand; how much less in the *whole heap* of Vanity and *Sin*, which he has been amassing all his life long?

And when the very best of his *Actions* need the *meritorious* Blood of his Jesus, and his own *penitential* Tears to cleanse them; how much reason has he, does he think, to mourn over the rest?

*Psal.* 69.5.

*Psal.* 73.22.

Upon the whole *survey* of his Life he considers his *Folly*; O God, says he, *thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee. So foolish was I; I was as a beast before thee:* and his *Wickedness* to a gracious God, in doing those things he should not have done, and might have chosen to do; and in leaving undone those things he should and might have done, if he would.

*Rom.* 6.21.

Further he possesses his Thoughts with the *juame* and *turpitude* of his sins together with the *fruitlessness* of them, and the extream *danger* and *sad consequences*, they have run him into; all which three *S. Paul* has joined together; and he asks himself in the Apostle's words, *What fruit had I then of those things* (even when I committed them) *whereof I am now* (or at least ought to be) *ashamed; for the end of those things* (I do with horror perceive) *is Death.*

Alas! *what fruit* indeed? no profit at present, but infamy among good people, and God for his part has promised no good to such things, while men live in them; nor can they (their own Consciences tell them) while they live so, expect any good at his hands: So that there remains for them continuing such, resolving so to live and die, nothing but the dismal Expectation of a lamentable Doom to *Eternal death.*

Above all, his humble Soul is seized with the tender apprehension of *Divine wrath*, for having so highly, so frequently offended a good God. His spirit is drunk up with the sense of God's displeasure. *This* is his most concerning grief, which parches his soul, and he moistens his drought with his tears. And *this* is that which makes up the sincerity of his *Contrition*: for all those other Considerations may be but Reflexions upon a man's own Interest.

And now what reason has he to weep and *mourn*, when he lays all this to Heart, to break it and dissolve it into Penitence?

In a word; when he runs over the *History* of his own Life, and there reads in *capital* Letters the many Instances of God's gracious dealings with him; and the no less of his own ungracious returns; as if his God and he had been all along at strife, which should outvy the other, the one in Obligingness, the other in Ingratitude; his signal *Preservations* from imminent dangers, and his wonderful *Providences* in the utmost Necessities, and what sorry requitals he has made to Divine goodness: this consideration on both hands kindly melts him down, and with the same penitent tears he refreshes the memory of *Mercies*, and blots out the remembrance of *Sins.*

And

And then *lastly*, he bewails his *wants* :

The want of that *original Righteousness* lost in *Adam*, which though by God's just sentence intailed upon all his Posterity, upon his Personal forfeiture and Transgression ; yet he does not reflect upon him, as knowing he has himself, in various Instances of his life, given his own consent to his Progenitours miscarriage, and probably outdone him too by many wilful woful deliberate sins.

The want of *God's Grace* to *pardon* him. This, he knows, is not easily to be purchased. He considers, it cost Christ his most precious Blood, and thinks not much it should cost him the cheap Price of his Tears.

He takes notice, that as there is *merit*, a price of Ransom, so there is *merit* too, a laver of Regeneration : and that though as to the *Redemption* of our souls, that lay wholly in Christ's *merit*, and our Repentance or whatever good works, have nothing to do in that, as having no merit in them ; yet as to the *purgation* and cleansing of them, that his own *Repentance* is absolutely necessary, and that that Repentance is not sincere, unless attended with new *Obedience*.

Therefore with bended Knees and broken Heart, he supplicates, as a poor penitent self-condemned Malefactor, for reprieve at the Bar of divine Justice, before Sentence past against him, for *Pardon*.

But this he knows is only to be an act of Grace *without* him for his *Justification*, of which he endeavours to get an Assurance and Evidence by Grace *within* him for his *Sanctification*.

Want of *Grace* to *assist* and *strengthen* him. This he sues for with the most importunate cries, while there is place for Repentance. He looks back upon his Life past, and *mourns* over it, that he may clear his sight to look forward the better to his ways for the time to come.

At the close of all his sadning Meditations, here is his only Comfort, that what is wanting in himself, has been made up by his *Jesus*, and that the Son of God took up our Nature on purpose to *justify* all true penitent Believers by his *blood*, and to *sanctify* them by his Spirit ; to expiate our *sins* by his *Satisfaction*, and to strengthen our *Performances* by his *Grace*.

Wherefore having rinsed and bathed his soul in his own Repentant tears, he comes in faith to that *Fountain*, which was open'd for iniquity, Zach. 13. 1. and there cleanses himself from all unrighteousness.

I say, finding no righteousness of his own he can trust to, he lays hold on the Righteousness of God in Christ by faith for his own Justification, Rom. 3. 22. and resolves to justify that *faith* of his by a holy *Obedience* ; since he is well assured, that the bare *Assurance* of *Faith*, without the *Obedience* of faith, will not stand any man in much stead.

Having thus bemoan'd himself, he extends his Charity *Universally* to all Mankind. It grieves him to see men run such desperate courses in pursuit of vain and pernicious designs. *Rivers of waters run down mine eyes*, says the Royal Prophet, *because men keep not thy Law*.

We read of two *Philosophers*, who were of so different a temper, that one laugh'd at the *follies*, the other wept for the *miseries* of men. It may be a question, whether were the better Philosopher ? but certainly this was the more Christian temper. And such is our *Christian Philosopher*.

It afflicts his Heart, when he observes, how most of the sober and industrious people of the World misemploy their time and thoughts in the pursuit of profits and preferments, and what a great deal of pains they take to be eternally unhappy; when they might with much less ado and charge purchase to themselves a heavenly Inheritance.

And as his Soul bleeds for those whole Multitudes and Shoals of men and women, that miscarry and go the wrong way, embracing things of nought instead of true Happiness; so he is most compassionately concerned for those, who find themselves no other business but to sin; who live at that no less *irrational* then *impious* rate, as if there were neither Heaven nor Hell, and so spend their present time, as if there were no Futurity in expectation; or at least manage themselves in that supine careless way, as if it would come to all one at last, whatever they do, whatever course they take; that is, as if God had inevitably doom'd every man, and concluded him by an irrevocable unalterable Decree to his destiny: so that *Virtue* or *Vice* in the end comes much to a pass, and there is no difference betwixt him that fears God, and him that fears him not; or as if men, who have accustomed themselves to a way of sinning, might excuse themselves upon the score of a *Fatal necessity*, and it were not now in their Power, after they have contracted evil Habits, to do otherwise then they do.

These are desperate *Notions*, full of as dangerous Consequence as of senseless Impiety, and such as I hope are strangers to all Christian breasts.

In this case he *mourns* for those, who will not mourn for themselves; and instead of shewing *Passion* to their *persons*, he entertains their *Condition* into his most tender *Compassion*.

Particularly, he laments the *Sins* and *Judgments* of the Nation he lives in.

Jer. 9. 1.

He cries out with the Prophet, *O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a Fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the Daughter of my people.* The same word in Hebrew *ayin* signifies both an *Eye* and a *Fountain*, as if it had been made for no other use. A place well worth our daily perusal; a Chapter worthy, I say, to be read every day, by every one that hears me, in his Closet.

The *profaneness* and the *spiritual* as well as *carnal wantonness* of the times are the Subject of his most concerned griefs. *National wickedness* he bewails as the great *Provocation*; and *national Divisions*, as the likeliest *Instrument* of an impending ruin.

For not being able to determine, whether we are more *wicked* against God, or *divided* among our selves, he considers that God many times punishes one sin with another, and may (for ought he knows) design those *Divisions*, (such may the sad effects of them be, if let alone, at long run) to be the Scourges and Lashes of our *Impieties*, and prays we may never so provoke God, whatever his intended Judgments may be, as to deliver us into the hands of men, whose very *Mercies* we have found *Cruelties*, and whose former *Cruelties* yet, if ever they come to Power again, to make another Trial, would be lookt on as *Mercies* in comparison, let them pretend what they will, to lull us in Security.

O may the miracle of our *Restitution* never through our *Ingratitude* be forgotten; never through our *Neglect* be lost!

These



These evils are things sink deep into his Heart, and take up his most astonishing Meditations.

He foresees the evils to come, and so hides, as to retire to his closet, Prov. 22.3. to weep over them: but so appears too, as to stand in the gap.

Upon this Theme he spends his most afflictive and affectionate Devotions; and for his Brethren and Companions sake wishes well to Jerusalem, and especially to Sion; to the State and Church. If I forget Jerusalem (says David) in my Mirth; nor will he in his Mourning; but, what David himself also did in his 51 Psalm, alter the mourning over his own sins, he prays that God would do good in his good pleasure unto Sion, and build up the walls of Jerusalem. Psal. 122.2.  
Psal. 137.6.  
Verse 12.

Thus he takes up his Lamentation; but this in private to practise Devotion, not publickly to exercise Censure.

We read Isa. 59. 11. a strange jumble of Expressions upon this very occasion. We roar like Bears, and mourn sore like Doves. What doth roaring and mourning? what do Bears and Doves do together?

I do not find, that any Interpreter, Critick, or other, hath help us to a distinction. Let me be bold, and, I hope, I can justify it, to make one.

I have constantly observ'd, in these sacred composures, either a Rise and Gradation of the same sense, or at least an Antithesis or Opposition of contrary senses. Thus it is here in a twofold respect, both of Persons and Things or Causes.

As to Persons; to roar like Bears, is to do perhaps, what Vulgar spirits use to do in such instances of national calamities, the Prophet there speaks of; to rail and rave at the Government they live under, for any ill accidents, that happen to them. And to mourn like Doves, is, with Pious Souls, to retire into the Closet, and there privately to grieve under the sense of God's displeasure and of our provocations, which have forced the Almighty to these severities.

And so in like manner for the Causes: roaring may be our complaining of the Judgments that befall us; and mourning is our bewailing the Sins that were the occasions of them.

You'll say according to this Character, this mourning is a doleful Lesson: No; 'tis a blessed and comfortable Exercise our Saviour invites us to. He so mourns, as to be chearful in the midst of his Mournings: for he is Blessed at present, and sure of Comfort hereafter.

Besides, that in his ordinary converse he finds himself obliged by the same Apostle in the same place, to act both parts according to occasion; to rejoyce with them that rejoyce, no less then to weep with them that weep. Rom. 12.15.

And good reason hath our Mourner to be of this, as well as of the other temper, as we shall find in the next part, which is

II. The Reasons to make good the blessed and comfortable Condition of these Mourners.

1. 'Tis a sure sign of Spiritual Life; in that they are sensible and tender: for this Mourning is an effect and expression of the tenderest Sense. This is right tenderneß of Conscience, to be sensible of sins and of wants.

Eph. 4. 19.

Gangren'd and mortified parts are without sense; when those, that have life in them, are of the quickest apprehension. Hence the *Apostle* calls those that are dead in their sins ἀπαύνοις, they have given over grieving; or, as we *English* it, they are past feeling; *Desperantes*, says the *Vulgar*, who having made themselves insensible, and through custom of sinning lost the sense of sin, run on desperately; and despairing now of ever growing better, care not what becomes of them.

2 Chro. 33. 12.

*Manasses* had run such a course, that he was well near stupified and benumbed in his spiritual senses; but now, that the irons had entred into his soul, and his Afflictions had brought him to his senses and himself; he pours out his Repentance in a flood of tears, through which he swims safe to Harbour.

This mourning and weeping then is a good token, that there is *Grace* still left at the Heart; for that is the *Spring* which feeds the *Cisterns* of the eyes, and supplies their penitential streams, dissolving and pouring out its self at those floodgates.

This the *Greeks* have remarked even to a *Proverb*, ἀγαθὸν δαίμονος ὁ δάκρυον, that it is so far from being the Character of an effeminate passion, to weep; that the most generous Natures (they observed) are the most naturally and tenderly inclined, and apt to express themselves this way.

It is the opinion therefore of some *Schoolmen*, that the damned cannot shed tears, because they have no sense, no grace.

2. 'Tis a sure way to improve *Grace*. The early and the later rain makes fruitful, it mellows the ground, and swells and bursts the seed. Thus 'tis said, *Psal.* 65. 9, 10. Thou visitest the Earth and waterest it, thou greatly enrichest it with the River of God, which is full of water; thou preparest them corn when thou hast so provided for it. Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly, thou settlest the hard clods. How? by causing rain to descend into the furrows thereof; thou makest it soft or dissolvest it with showers, thou blessest the springing or increase thereof.

These are the silver drops of *Sion*, *Psal.* 133. 3. which make the *Valleys* fruitful, and stand so thick with Corn, that they sing and shout for joy, as 'tis in the last verse of that 65. *Psal.*

Prov. 11. 25.

This is that in the *Proverbs*, He that watereth, shall be watered himself; he that softens his Heart with tears of Contrition, shall have it bedew'd with God's grace. And how must that pious Soul needs be improved with the increase of God, which hath both *Sun* and *Rain* to forward it? the gleam and sunshine of *Divine Grace*, and the showers of its own true *Penitence*.

3. 'Tis attended at present with Joy and Comfort; Joy in the Holy Ghost, and the Comfort of the Spirit, whose great office it is to be the Comforter.

*Dolet Christianus, & de dolore gaudet*, says a Father. He rejoices for his weeping; nay, and rejoices in it: So that they are only *tantum dolentes*, 2 *Cor.* 6. 10. as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing.

2 Cor. 7. 10.

Matth. 27. 5.

Worldly sorrow worketh death. *Judas*'s was such, who went and hang'd himself, say we; ἀμύχαν, he was choaked with grief, as some *Criticks* render it. So it is in the *Acts*; he burst asunder with Melancholy, and all his bowels gush'd forth; *Acts* 1. 18. but that was a sorrow of despair; whilst this other *Godly sorrow* works Salvation.

Even

Even in common Nature there is a pleasure goes along with the expression of sorrow; *Est quædam flere voluptas*; by setting open the sluices of grief, to give ease to a burthened heart.

Above all, as these *liquid Pearls* are the richest Ornaments of a pious Soul, so this *Celestial water* distilled from the *Alembick* of the Eye, is the highest *Cordial*; as that which not only rejoices the sinners heart, but is the Joy of *Angels* too, and is the most acceptable *Libamen* and drink-offering to God himself; when a man according (as 'tis said in the *Psalms*) pours out his soul before him. Whence the word in the original, that expresses tears, *דמעה*, is set to signify the choicest and most precious *Gums* and Juices of the noblest trees, as *Balsom* and the like. Psal. 42. 4.

Such pleasure and satisfaction God takes in our relentings, that he who makes his *Sun* to rise and *Rain* to fall on the ungracious and ungrateful, and is never behind any one in kindness, will much more send the *Light* of his Favour and *Dew* of his Blessing to those who shall thus prepare themselves for it.

And surely when the *Heart is like Wax melted in the midst of his bowels*, &c. then doubtless it is best fitted to receive the Impressions of the *Spirit*, by which we are sealed to the day of *Redemption*; a Seal to assure pardon and to confer grace; and among those graces and fruits of the *Spirit*, Joy is none of the least. Psal. 22. 14. Eph. 4. 30. Gal. 5. 22.

4. It capacitates and disposes for future Joys and Comforts. Sorrow may sojourn or lodge with him, as a *Stranger* and *Pilgrim*, (as himself is; upon which account the *Apostle* bids us to abstain from fleshly lusts) here in the night of his Mortality; but there is an unspeakable Joy to arise with him in the morning of the Resurrection. Psal. 30. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 11.

Such mourning souls have a larger Capacity, by emptying themselves of worldly Joys, to be filled with spiritual, and by denying themselves carnal satisfactions to make room for better.

Again, they have a right Relish and a true Gust for their expected Comforts, which will make them Comforts indeed: whereas those who have glutted themselves with sensual Delights, leave no room, and have no taste for spiritual and eternal Pleasures; like feverish Palates, all whatever Delicacies, be they never so sweet, taste bitter to them.

Heaven it self would not be Heaven to such; and though God be Almighty and can do all things, though he be All-sufficient in himself, and is able to satisfy all his Creatures: yet these by their sinful Prepossessions render themselves incapable of his Grace and his Goodness both.

Whence it is said of such, that their Expectation shall perish with them; because there being no such sensual Entertainments for them after this Life, as they have altogether injured their Faculties and senses to, while they were here; they will necessarily in the next Life be at an eternal loss. Prov. 10. 28.

III. I have done with the Reasons; it remains that I apply in a word or two, partly by way of Corollary or Deduction, partly by way of Caution.

The Corollaries, I may hence present you with, are such as these.

1. That Christianity, notwithstanding it requires mourning, is no dumpish melancholy Profession. There is Comfort in this mourning as well as after it. The Dove is an Embleme of Mourning, and of Love and Joy too.

Even



Acts 5. 41.  
Matth. 5. 17.

Even the Severities of our Religion are joyous. The Apostles rejoiced in the dignation of their Sufferings, and in our Fasts we are commanded to anoint our heads, which was one of the solemn Ceremonies used at Festivals.

Prov. 15. 13.

A merry Heart, the Wiseman tells us, is a continual Feast; and what is that merry Heart, לב טוב, but a good heart, a good and a clear Conscience? Where such a heart is, there must be a cheerfulness; and where this Mourning is, there will be such a Heart; and no where else can it be but there.

2. That this Mourning consists not in outward Garb and pretended Restraints, but in an ingenuous hearty sorrow for sin according to God.

Matth. 5. 15.

He has learnt so to mourn as not to disfigure the Face. It is not a meager grim Scythian look, bespeaks a FASTER; nor is it an affected Pharisaical demureness, or a supercilious sadness of countenance which is to denominate a Mourner.

Nor is it to immure ones self into a Monastery, and as it were to leave the World, that this Grace requires of us; since there are too too many of such Votaries that retire from the Duties indeed, but not from the Delights of life. Our mourner is so Contemplative as not to neglect Acting. He so mourns in his private Devotions, as to be cheerful and useful in his publick Conversation.

2 Cor. 7. 9.

His Chamber indeed, his Closet and his other Retirements are hung with mourning: but his outward Rooms, where he is to entertain and converse, are full of hospitality and freedom. He sorrows according to God, or, as we may read it, as to God; but is cheerful and courteous, that is, human among men.

3. That the Christian Mourners main business is to bewail his own sins, and to lament the sins of others too indeed in his Closet, but not so as to upbraid their persons, much less to revile his Superiors.

And here I cannot but reflect upon a general ill humour of People, who upon such Instances, especially where there appears any thing like a Miscarriage in publick, presently throw the blame upon others, and find fault with any body, with any thing, but never look home to themselves.

How much more pious? nay, how much wiser and happier should we be, if we would every one meekly bear his own burthen, acknowledge his own faults, and reform his own Life? and then what Charity we have to spare for others sins, to imploy it in our Prayers rather than our Censures; in weeping for them, and not in railing at them.

I know there are not a few, who, as some little Politicians are ready to lay the blame of all publick Miscarriages upon men in the superiour Order of the Church; so the Vulgar people do fondly impute the sins and vices of the times much to the Compliance, or at least the coldness of Preachers, that they do not cry aloud.

It is to be feared, and I must speak it, (I wish to God it were not so,) that this abundance and variety of Preaching, has, through the corruption of mens hearts been one reason among the rest, of hardning people and making them Sermon-proof; whilst these Exercises of ours pass only for Trials of Skill, or Divertisements of itching ears; and a new Discourse serves only to make the old ones forgotten, and is it self so serv'd by the next that comes.

I must confess the *Pulpit* has much to do in setting and pressing home *Duty*, and convincing of *sin*; and *That* I may be bold to say, is no where less wanting, then here in this place, God be praised; bating, that we do not, as some perhaps would have us, deliver our Messages in such saucy and undutiful language, as has been the manner of some *Zealots*, to curse their *Rulers* upon pretence of praying for them, and to expose their *Superiours* Persons, to an open contempt of their Authority, when they have in *Duty* (as they would have it thought) to their *ministerial* Function reprov'd publick Crimes.

The business here of the *Preacher* is to propose and debate things in general terms, that every Hearer may take his portion, but (which ought to be every bodies business) the devotion of the *Closet*, may with much better success descend and search at least into every man's own particular Case.

Let then *me* and *you* go thither, and find our selves Employment. Let us first take our selves to task, and then bemoan with our selves the publick. For 'tis not the studied *Eloquence* of the *Tongue*, but the *mourning* Language of the *Heart* and weeping *Rhetorick* of the *Eyes*, is to prevail for a thorough Reformation, either of our own or others lives.

A great President, *S. Austin*, one of the greatest Propugners, because one of the greatest Examples, of God's Grace, to whose Conversion we owe that excellent *Hymn*, the *Te Deum*, in our morning Service. A man of great *Parts* and of as ill *Habits*, before he was turn'd *Christian*, whose Passions and Vices had engaged his Reason on their side. What is to be done? he is not to be argued with, nor to be disputed or preacht out of his Principles and Practices. His *mother*, who had a passionate tenderness for him, wearied him rather then wrought on him, with her daily Intreaties and Advices, back'd with a motherly Authority and Kindness. *S. Ambrose*, a Prelate of that Sanctity, that *Theodosius*, whose two sons first set up the *Eastern* and the *Western* Empires, meekly submitted to his Censures, and was content to stand Excommunicate, till he had made satisfaction to the Church; applied him with Discourse in private and publick. He laugh'd at the simplicity of the *old woman*, and slighted the plainness of the *old man*, till at last (according to the good *Bishops* prediction, who bid *Monica* be content and wait a while, telling her, *Non potest filius tot lacrymarum perire*, A child that has cost so many tears cannot miscarry) it pleased God to make him a dutiful Son to his Mother, and an eminent *Father* as any to the Church.

These, these are likely to be the most prevailing Methods of obtaining Grace at God's hands for our selves and others. *Preces & lacrymæ*, Prayers and Tears, which have upheld the Church amidst the severest Persecutions, must maintain and keep her up against those threatening evils, we may with reason foresee are likely enough to befall us for our *Profaneness* and our *Divisions*; but have little reason to think will any other way be prevented.

Lend me your patience a little longer, and I have done.

In the *last* place I come to the *Cautions* that are to remove those Impediments, which may lie in our way to the Practice of this *Grace*, and those are *Carnal joys*; wherein I shall be very brief.

1. First then consider with me, that these *sensual Pleasures* are *brutish*, common to us with Beasts. Lasciviousness makes men like *Goats*; Intemperance like *Swine*.

'Tis true, those Comforts we draw from the Creatures, are allow'd us for the support of *Nature* and the refreshment of *Spirit*, but not for the encouragement of *Lust*. And for a man wholly to addict himself to such satisfactions, is to make his *belly* his *God*, and, with as much Folly as Wickedness, to account that his *glory*, which ought to be his *shame*, *Phil.*

3. 19.

2. *Secondly*, They are *flashy* and unsatisfactory even to rational Appetite, much more when it is spiritualized. It is with the Prodigal to feed upon husks.

*Ecd.* 7. 6.

*Phil.* 3. 8. 9.

The Wiseman compares the *Laughter of fools* to the crackling of *thorns*; they make a blaze indeed and a noise, but they are prickly and vanishing. Or e're *your pots*, that is, your Hearts, be made hot with these *thorns*, Indignation shall vex them as a thing that is *raw*, as a new sore, which they leave behind them upon Conscience.

3. *Thirdly*, They extinguish, or at least wound and damp our spiritual Life. When mens minds are immerst in *sensuality*, they loose all *spiritual* sense.

*Hos.* 4. 11.

*Wine and Women*, the two great Instances of a sensual life, the Prophet *Hosee* tells us, *take away the Heart*; they debauch the *Understanding* and infeeble the *Courage* and *Resolution* of a man; they make him corrupt and weak in his *Principles*, negligent of his true *Interests*, and remiss in his *Affairs*. And if they besot even our *natural parts*, no wonder if they decay and impair our *spiritual graces*.

1 *Cor.* 15. 50.

*Luke* 6. 25.

4. *Fourthly*, If indulged and continued in, they forfeit eternal Joys. It is positively affirmed, that *flesh and blood*, that is, any man that follows carnal Pleasures, such as *Flesh* and *Blood* suggest, cannot inherit the *Kingdom of Heaven*. For as here there is a *Blessedness* to those that *mourn*, so in *S. Luke* there is a *Wo* to those that *do not*; *Wo unto you that laugh now*; for ye shall *mourn and weep*.

It will be a sad reckoning, when in the other World it shall be said of such men, that they *have received their Consolation*; and a shrewd *Memento*, and well worth our most serious regard, was that of *Abraham* to the Rich man; *Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivest thy good things*.

To conclude; while we are possess'd with *sensual Delights* and *fleshy Joys*, we cannot be disposed for this *mourning*; and yet without this mourning we cannot be truly *Christians*, nor assure our selves of being either *blessed* here, or *comforted* hereafter.

O then, let us beg of God the Spirit of *Contrition*, the gift of *mourning* and the *Grace of tears*, as the Ancients called it, that we may so *mourn* in this Life over our Sins, as to prevent that *wailing* and *howling* under our Punishments in the next, which shall find no pity at God's hands or mans, and receive no *Comfort* for ever, for ever.

1 *Cor.* 13. 12.

For that there are *immortal Souls* lodg'd in these Tenements of *Clay*, which will survive the body, when that shall be mouldred into its dust; that there is a *State of Rewards*, when every one shall receive according to what he has done in the flesh; that there will be a time of *Judgment*, when God, who made us *Creatures* of understanding *Faculties*, and furnished our *Nature* with so many excellent *Advantages*, shall call us to an Account of our *Stewardship*, and shall pass a righteous impartial Sentence upon every individual person (for with him *there is no respect of persons*) suitably to that good or ill use, every one has made of those *Privileges* and *Favours*, God has in his life time blest him with; These are truths



so riveted into natural Conscience, that they need no Scriptural Demonstration.

And as to divine *Predetermination*, and the Subtraction of his Grace necessary for our Conduct; far be it from any one, who is toucht with the least sense of Piety, to imagine that God has render'd it impossible for any man to amend his life and better his estate, by having aforehand concluded him to a state of Misery; to which 'tis his own wicked *Obstination*, and not God's *Predestination*, that is leading him; or to conceive that God, who so graciously, so importunately calls upon us for *Repentance*, and with that Patience awaits our return, and orders all his Methods of *kindness* and *severity* both to that end, will deny his Grace to any poor sinner, who shall with an honest heart and sincere endeavours seek it at his hands.

And let us pray in the *Churches* words, which she hath appointed for our daily use in this *Lent-season*; that the *Almighty and everlasting God, who hates nothing that he has made, and doth forgive the sins of them that are Penitent, would create and make in us new and contrite Hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of him, the God of all Mercy, perfect Remission and Forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord:*

To whom with the *Father* and blessed *Spirit*, the *Three-One God*, be all Honour and Praise now and ever. *Amen.*

## The Third Beatitude; or *The Blessedness of the Meek.*

A Sermon Preached at S. Peters Westminster,  
March 9. 167 $\frac{5}{6}$ . being Palm-Sunday.



HE holy Evangelist S. *Matthew*, giving an Account of this days Solemnity, when our Saviour rode in Triumph into the holy City, attended with numerous throngs, who with joyful Acclamations welcomed the King of *Israel*, and strow'd victorious Palms in his way, applies a Testimony taken out of two of their Prophets, *Matth. 21. 5. Tell ye the Daughters of Sion*, saith he, *Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an Ass, and the Colt the foal of an Ass.* I shall not limit my Discourse to the particular *History* of the day, but shall rather treat in general of that *Grace of Meekness*, which our blessed Lord came in person so eminently to exemplifie, not only in his Death and Sufferings, but all along in his Life, even in the midst of his most glorious Actions; that *Grace*, which in his Doctrine he did so highly recommend to the World, as where he says, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly; Matth. 11. 29.* that *Grace* in a word, to which in the very Entrance of his *Sermon upon the Mount*, he here assigns a blessing both in this Life and that which is to come, as you find it written by the same Evangelist;

S. *Matth. V. 5.*

*Blessed are the Meek; for they shall inherit the Earth.*

**F**irst give me leave briefly to explain the Words. *The Meek*] then, that is, Those, who are of a soft and mild Temper, of a quiet and gentle Spirit, of a sweet Compliance and yielding Disposition in their *general* Carriage; That can, as to God, bow the neck of their *Reason* to the yoke of Faith, and captivate their *Understanding* to the greatest Improbabilities, if they appear to be divine Truths; that submit their *Wills* to the severest of God's Commands, and obey him chearfully even in those Instances wherein he seems to Flesh and Blood to be the hardest Master; and that quietly without any murmuring or repining sit down content under the worst of his *Providences*.

Those,

Those, who in their behaviour toward their *fellow-men*, shew an humble Reverence to their *Superiors*, a mild and modest Regard to their *Equals*, and a kind Condescension to those of *inferiour* Rank.

Particularly, that in cases of *Injury* and *Wrong* are so far from breaking out into unbeseeming Passion and proud Wrath, or from seeking Revenge; so far from recompensing Evil with Evil, that they study to overcome others evil with their good, and think themselves the more oblig'd to them in all Offices of Christian love, by how much the greater unkindness they receive at their hands; and more especially to *Governours* and those Powers, whom God has set over them, pay an exact Obedience, and yield a hearty Submission, not only for Wrath but for Conscience sake.

These who are thus affected, thus disposed, thus behaved, are

*Blessed.*] However the World may look upon them as sheepish men, and such as are most liable to Affront and Abuse, to Oppression and Hardship; yet these find at present a great Satisfaction and Tranquillity of mind within themselves, and have a calm in their breasts, whilst others are tost with the Storms and Hurry of their passions; in that they have the compleat Mastery of *themselves*, and the Conquest of their *Enemies* too, if any can be so to such, as do not offend or provoke them; whose Malice and Spight finds it self most certainly defeated and baffled by such a soft and unconcern'd Temper: and in that they live for the most part quietly and at ease, securely and happily here, whilst others that are Turbulent and Seditious, Froward and Disobedient, do but bring trouble and vexation and a world of unhappiness upon themselves; These by a special Protection of Heaven, and by the ordinary course of things, even in the worst of Times, usually enjoying their Estates and the Good things of this Life, God has blest them with, with comfort, and lengthning their lives with Prosperity and Honour in their Country and Land of Nativity, which is the temporal *Inheritance of the Earth* here promised that belongs to them; of which if they should by God's secret Providence for their Trial or Improvement be deprived, as sometimes it happens, to which we shall speak toward the close; they are sure not to fail of the future Reward in the *Land of the living*, which they are to expect hereafter. For that also is intended by this Expression,

*They shall inherit the Earth.*] They shall be instated in a double *Canaan*, and after having lived a Life of *Paradise* in this World, shall be translated to *Heaven* in the next, as having the Promise both of this 1 Tim. 4. 8. Life and of that which is to come; their temporal Felicity and Quiet, they meet with here, being but a Type and Earnest, a Pledge and an Engagement of eternal Happiness.

For we must not imagine, that their Advantages are limited only to the *Earth*, as if they were to be excluded Heaven; or that their *Blessedness* consists only in having their good things here in this Life, and no more to be expected afterwards, which were indeed a Curse, not a Blessing; but, as our Saviour himself much in the same case says elsewhere, they shall have a *Hundredfold* in this World, and in the World to come Matth. 19. 29. *everlasting Life*.

Other Graces may have much of their Reward in futurity only; but this grace of *Meekness* assures us of both, a long and prosperous Life, a quiet and happy condition here, and an eternal *Inheritance*, an everlasting *Canaan* hereafter, and that's the full Importance of their *inheriting the Earth*.



Our *Observation* hence will be; That a *Meek quiet spirit and demeanour* is a fair Assurance of a mans both *Temporal and Eternal Welfare*; a good Security, I say, both of his present and future Inheritance. Or, that the *Meek person* is the most likely to thrive and prosper in both *Worlds*.

To clear this *Observation* we shall,

1. Express the *Marks and Characters* of this blessed *meek Temper*, wherein it consists, and how it shews it self, both in the *General* and in its *Particular* regards of Submission, whether to *God* in his *Truths*, in his *Commands*, in his *Providences*; or to *Men*, whether *Superiours, Equals*, or *Inferiours*; especially to those who have the right of *Governing* us, or who by doing us *wrong* provoke us; in all which cases this *Vertue and Grace of meekness* has a great influence upon all the *Duties of Life*.

2. We shall lay down some *Reasons* to adjust and confirm the *Observation*; together with an *Answer* to an obvious *Objection*, that sometimes it happens otherwise, and this *Promise* seems not always to be made good in this *Life*.

3. In the last place we shall draw forth somewhat for *Application*, and conclude with some *Cautions* against *Anger* and froward *Passion*, the opposite Vice to this *Vertue*.

I. *First*; For the *Notes and Marks* by which we may know this gracious *Temper*.

In *general*. This *Meek Person* is of an even equable Constitution of mind. This was the highest pitch of Perfection, the ancient *Philosophers* aspir'd unto, ἀταραχία, to be undisturbed in Mind: but his *Christianity* has advanced him higher then their *Philosophy* could them; for his *Soul* is brightned and strengthened with the presence of his *God*, who has left no room there for the Concerns of *self* to disquiet him.

John 6. 38.

Matth. 26. 53.

Gal. 5. 22.

He is made like to the *Son of God*, who came not to do his own Will, but the will of him that sent him; and though he had *Legions of Angels* to attend him, yet would not call down any of them to assist him in his fleshly *Resentments*: and he is replenished with the *Fruits of God's Spirit, Love, Meekness, Gentleness, Long-sufferance*; that whatever his outward circumstances may be, no Accident can disorder him or bring any *Discontent* upon him worth a *Passion*, hardly a *Notice*, much less turn him out of the Possession of his *Soul*.

Psalm 16. 6.

Psalm 2. 1.

It was said of one of the *Cæsars* for his deformity, *Animus Galbæ male habitat*. But let his *Fortunes*, his outward condition be what it will, his *Mind* is at ease and fairly lodged; and he can look up and say, Thou hast made my *Portion* to fall in a fair place.

Though the *Heathen rage*, &c. he is sure *God sits in heaven and laughs them to scorn*. Though the world be in a hurly-burly, he finds all quiet and well within.

Like a tight Vessel, he lies snug, and can live in *Tempests* and *cross-tides*; and, as *Noah's Ark* having her door and her windows shut close, floats aloft in the midst of *Deluges*. The angry *Billows* find no admission; he has not so much as a leaking cranny about him, at which the *briny waves*, that dash upon him, can enter to discompose his rest: but like a well-built House, that is *Windtide* and *Watertide*, as we commonly say, he keeps out all *Weathers*, and stands the shock of all *Storms* from without. He has that within, preserves him from all danger, and secures him even from the *Apprehension* of it, his own Un-

con-

concernedness, and his Relyance upon God the Rock of Ages.

Isa. 26. 4.

This inward Evenness and Constancy of Mind, (for such are those things, which are beaten close together, as his humble Soul is) *adorns* at once and *defends* him in all his outward Deportment.

He is *smooth* and *solid*, in all Occurrences, like polished *Marble*; and does by a seeming Yieldingness make the most forcible Resistance. Whatever Violence or Rudeness is offered him, his *solidity* hinders its Impression, and his *smoothness* makes it glide off. And though in ill weather, we say, even *Marble* seems to give and relent, and by its sweating to express a Concern; yet these are not, as is fancied, the *Tears* of the Marble, but only the *symptoms* and results of that vain attempt, the *ambient air* had made upon it, which being not able to pierce the Substance of the generous stone, leaves a gentle Dew behind it upon the surface; and instead of dissolving it, condenses it *self* in to the grosser Element of water.

To *Friends* this Meek person is friendly, and to *Foes* so too; and makes a double Advantage of his *meekness*, to *requite* good turns by acknowledging them, and to *revenge* ill ones by taking no notice of them; there being no more convictive Confutation of *Calumny*, then meek silence or a *soft Answer*; no greater or surer Vindication of an *Injury*, then passing it by and returning kindness for it. Prov. 15. 1.

And this, as it is a far more noble way of *Revenge*, then to beat an Enemy at his own weapon; so it is a high point of *Interest*, so to vanquish the *Assailant* as to secure himself, which is done thus by disarming the *Aggressor* in despite of his Passion. For if there be any Ingenuity in him, this *Meekness* will oblige him to lay down the Cudgels, where he has no *Opponent* to fight against; or, at least, if he will not give over, it will make his blows insensible. What *Socrates* said, being asked, *What he would take for a box o' th' ear*; *A Helmet*, said he; may be rightly applied here. This *Meekness* is such a defense, as will either make the Adversary weary of striking, or, which is much at one, protect its Owner from feeling. And 'tis madness to encounter an *Achilles*, and to maintain a quarrel with one that is invulnerable.

It was a saying of that Wiseman, Ἀπὸ τῶν ἐχθρῶν σου, βλάψαι σὺ μὴ, his Enemy might *kill* him, but could not *hurt* him. His mind is guarded which is to feel the hurt.

What I have said of the particular case of *Enmity*, is true alike in all *afflictive* occasions; *In the great Water-floods they shall not come near him*. He may be surrounded, but he cannot be approached, so as to receive any hurt. Psal. 32. 6.

In *particular*; in our carriage to *God* or *Men*, I said, this *Grace* has a great influence upon all the Duties of Life.

What the *Philosophers* have taught concerning *moral Vertues*, that they are all linkt together, so that he that has one, has all, and who wants one has none at all; and what the *Poets* have fancied of their *Graces*, that they joyn hands and keep constant Company; is most exactly true of *Christian Graces* and *Vertues*, that where one is, all are in some proportion and degree to be found, as all proceeding from the same Spirit, and all useful and necessary to the same End. And this not only in the Heart, as to the *Habits* of them; but in the Actions too, as to the *Exercise* of them, they do *mutuas operas tradere*, intermix upon all Instances, and assist one another; that it is difficult enough sometimes to distinguish

distinguish those gracious Habits, either in themselves or by their effects, as he says of the *Nymphs*,

O. 11.

*Facies non omnibus una,  
Nec diversitas tamen, qualem decet esse Sororum.*

They are so like in their *Principles* and in their *Productions*, that it is hard to limit them by their proper *Definitions*, or to set them out so as to be known asunder by peculiar *Descriptions*.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

Phil. 1. 11. 10.

The *Seat* of them all is indeed most strictly the *Will*, whom they are to direct and assist in her *Elections* and *Choices*, and in the further acting of her powers. From thence their *Virtue* overspreads the *Affections*, to sweeten and advance them in imbracing and performing the *Commands* of the *Will*. Nor is the *Understanding* exempt from their Rule and Guidance; for though the main purpose of these divine Assistances is to make us *Better*, which is done by inclining the *Will*, rather than to make us *more knowing*, which is done by informing the *Understanding*; yet we cannot be truly *Good* without heavenly *Wisdom*, without being truly *Wise*; and the *Apostle* tells us, we should be *wise unto Salvation*; though the *Psalmist* has resolved it, the best use of that *Wisdom* is to do *thereafter*.

There is a *Meekness* then as in the *Will* and *Affections*, so in the *Judgment* and *Understanding* part also.

Now *Meekness* being that *virtue* or *grace*, which moderates more especially the *Passion* of *Anger* and *Wrath*; and this being a *Passion*, which is apt to hoodwink *Reason*, and mislead the *Will* upon all occasions of *Duty* we owe to God or men; it follows, that the other *Virtues* cannot well manage their offices and trusts without this, and that *Meekness* is upon this account very necessary to us in all instances of *Life*.

Hence it follows, that this *Meekness* it is, that makes us good *Christians*, good *Subjects*, good *Neighbours*, &c. and fits us for the *Duties* of all our *Relations*.

1. First as to *God*; *Meekness* is that, by which we are enabled to submit our selves to him; and that in the first place to the *Will of God*, that *Will* of his, as he has partly revealed it in his *Word*, partly as he discovers it daily in his *Works*; the one contained in *Scriptures*, the other delivered in every days *Providence*. To that we are to submit *Actively*; to this, *Passively* at least; there to obey God as a *Law-giver*; here as a *Governour*.

In *Scripture* are *Truths* and *Commands*; first,

The *Truths* of *God*; those he entertains with a ready *Faith* in submission to divine *Authority*, nor does he presume to interpose his own *Fancy* to conclude any thing *Authentick* from himself.

Matth. 22. 20.

He asks as our *Saviour* did concerning the *Tribute-money*, whose *image* and *supercription* doth it bear? and if it be *God's*, he presently accepts it. He knows that to *Coin* is a *Privilege* of *Sovereignty*, and none else shall be currant with him but what have the *divine Stamp* on them.

The *Philosopher* says, that whereas youth is more peremptory and positive in their affirmations; aged and experienced men are more wary, *περὶ ἧσαν ἴσως, μήχα*, they say *perhaps*, *peradventure*, *possibly*, *probably* it may be so; Such is our *meek* person in his *assertions*, where he has not downright *Authority* on his side.

And



And yet he will not imitate this *Philosopher* himself, who because he could not understand the true nature of *Euripus*, nor give an account of its flowing and reflowing, died for shame and discontent, that there should be any thing in Nature, which he could not find out. He in *mysteries* and things above the account of Reason is well satisfied, that he does not understand.

There are some deep places in Scripture, he knows, where *Elephants* may swim; others more shallow, where *Lambs* may wade, and he is content to be a Lamb rather than venture a drowning. He prefers a pious well meaning *Ignorance* before a dangerous *Curiosity* and an overweening knowledge.

This is the *meekness* of his *Understanding*; he takes truth upon Gods word, and as long as he knows all things necessary, and is assured the Spirit will lead him into all saving truth, he thinks he knows enough. John 16. 13.

The *Commands* of God in a more especial manner he makes his study. There his *Duty*, which he takes to be his main *Interest*, lies.

His *Faith* only was concerned in the *Truths*, but his *Obedience* in the *Commands*; and he measures the *Assurance* of his Faith by its *Obedience*; and concludes that if, as in *Abaz's* dial, his *obedience* go backward, his *Faith* must be gone back as many degrees; since the *shadow* moves according to the motion of the *Sun*. 2 Kings 20. 11.

He knows, it is a vain thing to expect to be justified by his *Faith*, when his Faith it self is not able to justify it self by its *Works*.

I have heard a *Reverend Person* say, if he were put to his choice to govern or to be governed, he would make the later as the surer choice; for then his *obedience* would absolve not only his *Obligations* but his very *mistakes* too. Thus our *meek* person chooses Gods will rather than his own, and says with the Psalmist, Lord, how I love thy *Commands*! more than gold and precious stones, then all the riches in the World; more than honey and the honey-comb, then all the pleasures of Life; and that upon this account too, that in keeping of them there is great reward. So that he looks upon it as no better then flattering and deceiving ones own Soul, for a man to apply to himself the divine *Promises*, without applying himself first to the *Commands*, there being no other way of Intitling himself to the one, but by Observing the other. Psal. 119. 127. Psal. 19. 10, 11.

This as to the *Word* of God, both as to *Truths* for the *Understanding*, and as to *Commands* for the *Will*; then as to his *Works*.

In his *Providence*, he humbly submits himself to all Gods gracious disposals, and when he is called forth to suffer, he chearfully engages in the service.

I have read of a *Physician*, who had an *Antipathy* to all venomous creatures, and finding that his Profession obliged him to an acquaintance, drew *Vipers* and *Toads* and *Spiders* upon his Study-wall, that he might familiarize them to his senses. So he has aforehand inured himself to *hardships*, that upon occasion he may not be a stranger to them.

Nor does he murmur or repine, when called forth to these Duties, as hardly dealt with; least by such reluctancies he might justly be accounted worthy of that character, which *S. Paul* with great indignation gives some, of being an *Enemy to the Cross of Christ*; but if his duty calls him, he willingly takes up his Cross and follows his Master, as knowing that he must imitate him in his *Passive*, as well as his *Active*. Phil. 3. 12.

Psal. 37. 7.  
1 Sam. 3. 18.

*Active* obedience, if he mean to be the better for both.

And in these cases he is *silent* or dumb to the Lord, and says with old Eli; *'Tis the Lord, let him do what seems good to him;* and he is sure that will be for his good too. This as to God.

*Secondly*; As to Men, whether of *superiour* Rank, *equal* place, or *inferiour* Degree.

As to *Superiours*; he is not angry, that any are above him, though he fare the worse, and be oppress'd by them, but behaves himself with modesty, humility and reverence, and shews those due Regards, which belong to their place.

Be they *Rich* or *Honourable*, he respects them to the full, as far as their *Riches* or *Honour* will bear it out; and when he meets with wicked Greatness, he owns their *Greatness* so, as not to comply with their *Wickedness* or partake of their sins.

Generally he treads a middle path betwixt *Flattery* and *Envy*; so as neither to sooth their perions, nor to malign their condition.

Eph. 5. 21.  
Phil. 2. 3.

Among *Equals*, he strictly observes the *Apostles* Rule, that we *submit* one to another in Love, every one thinking another *better* than himself. He bears with others *Infirmities*, as being conscious of his own. He takes no offence, and to be sure takes care to give none. If he *reprove* (as sometime the duty of Christianity may require) it is with such Candour and mild Language and meek Carriage, that he does them good without loosing their love; his very mode and manner of delivering himself besides his Reasons, is perswasive, and he prevails before he applies.

This to his *Acquaintance*, to whom he thinks himself obliged in this kind, and to whom he is no less thankful for the like Offices; which makes him the more successful in doing them himself.

To *Strangers* or those of no great Familiarity and Intimacy, he is by no means pragmatistical or meddling, but shews himself Civil and Modest; not taking upon him, but putting the best interpretation upon all that is said or done, and is sure to repress his own *Anger*, and is wary of raising it in others.

To *Inferiours*; He is full of courteous Condescensions; Kind, Loving and Obliging; nor does he oppress or tyrannize upon the advantage of Superiority, as considering that himself has *Superiours* too; but is humbly thankful to God upon this very account, that by placing him so *high*, he has given him the opportunity of obliging those below him; as on the other hand by setting him so *low*, he gives him the advantage of a meek obedience.

Eph. 6. 4.

However he judges it very misbecoming for him, to carry himself imperiously and haughtily upon the very score of Ingenuity; since there is nothing more exposes *Superiours* to contempt, than their own pride. He finds that *Superiours* owe a duty to *Inferiours*, as well as these to them; and that the Apostle has said, *Fathers provoke not your Children*. Wherefore he is more careful, that he may not provoke his *Inferiours*, then they can be wary of displeasing him.

Two sorts of men especially, I said before, this *Meekness* obliges us to; *Governours* and *Enemies*.

To

To *Governours* he pays a ready Obedience in all things *Lawful*, upon a *double* account, that both the *Thing* commanded, and the Authority commanding it, is lawful; and in this case he finds a *double* advantage in doing a Good action, and in obeying a Command besides.

In *Unlawful things* he chooses to suffer, but will not resist.

In things *doubtful* he takes the safest way, not to trust to his own Judgment, of which he is alway jealous; for if he should be mistaken, he considers it would be a double fault, the one the error of his Judgment, the other the neglect of his *Duty* upon that error.

Particularly as to the *Church*, there are *two* great concerns, *Truth* and *Peace*: that corrupted by *Heresie*, this disturbed by *Schism*. He knows how dangerous it is to come near the tents of *Schism*, and that *Rebellion* and *Schism* are but two different names for the same thing, (for *Corah's* rebellion was strictly in propriety of Language no more then *Schism*) and that whatever specious Pretences may be made to set a *Gloß* upon it, whether *Conscience* or *Liberty*, *Civil* or *Religious* rights, that they will come to a sad account in the end, whatever success they may have here at present.

For *Enemies*; this *meek* person is like the choicest *Sattins*; ruffle him as you will, he will not fret; he has no *gum*, no rancour or malice in him.

He is of *Hierocles's* mind in his *Paraphrase* upon the *Golden Verses*, that a good man has no *Enemy*, as being conscious to himself that he deserves none, or if he have, he makes that good use of him, that his Enmity turns to such Advantage, that it amounts to Friendship.

However he will not return *par pari*, like for like; he will not revenge himself, but leaves that, which is God's office, to him; and chooses rather to heap coals of fire on his *Enemies* head, then to put fire-coals under him; with a design, as *Metallists* do, only to melt him, not to consume him; and if any have a grudge for him, he bears no malice nor hatred in his Heart, but can pray for them, as the Church has taught him, that God would forgive them, and turn their Hearts. Rom. 12.19, 20.

Nor will he at any time quarrel about trifles, but values *Peace* above the greatest concerns. And if (which was never his intent) he have done any one *wrong*, he readily acknowledges it, and seeks to be reconciled, and to that end uses all fair and possible means, and is as ready to make ample satisfaction.

In a word, he justifies that Challenge of *Anaxagoras* the Apologist, that 'tis *Christianity* alone enjoins the love of *Enemies*, and he dares not love his *Enemy* so ill, as to renounce his *Christianity*, to be revenged on him.

We have done with the *Character*; the next thing to speak to is

## II. The Reasons.

1. *Within him* he has all quiet and serene.
2. *Over him* an especial Protection of Heaven.
3. *About him* the fair Respect of all that are ingenuous.
4. *Before him* a prospect of peace at the last.

Now what a *blessed* condition must *this* needs be, to be at Peace with God, with Men, with Himself, and to have a prospect of peace at last, to enjoy all sorts of *Peace*, *Internal*, *External*, *Eternal*? The word for *Peace* in Hebrew שָׁלוֹם denotes a Comprehension of all  *blessings*, and here besides it comprehends all kinds of *Peace*.



1. *Within him.* What delight and satisfaction of spirit, what Joy and contentment of mind must it be to a man to have conquered his unruly Passions, to have made all quiet at home, and freed himself from all inward Disturbances, whatever outward Accidents may happen; and by that means to get to the top of Christian *Philosophy*, far above all the Attainments of the wisest Heathens, and to make himself Master of greater Power and Privilege, than the greatest Emperours and Monarchs of the World ever had?

It was said of *Darius* the *Persian* Monarch's Empire, that it was like a raw Bull-hide, tread it down in one place, it rose up in another; he was never free, it should seem, from Insurrections and Mutinies. It is not so with this *Meek* person; he is always quiet, never discomposed or out of humour.

1 Pet. 3.4.

1 Sam. 15. 22.

2. *Above him.* S. Peter says, the Ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is of great price with God; he puts a high value upon it; he esteems Obedience better than Sacrifice, which was then the highest point of his Worship; and as he regards it now, so he will be sure to reward it hereafter.

Psal. 57. 1.

At present he covers their head from dangers, hides them in ill times under his *Pavilion*, till the Calamity be overpast. And when there is no Humane means left for their preservation, likely he does in some wonderful way protect them and provide for them, and is their sure Succour and Defence, their Shelter and Refuge in all adversities and distresses.

3. *About him.* For what person of any Reason or Ingenuity will offer him trouble or disquiet, who by his quiet Demeanour seeks to oblige all men? None but of Savage nature and outrageous Principles, that have thrown off the common sentiments and interests of Humanity will attempt his wrong, who has nothing to provoke them but his goodness.

So then no body molests him, because he molests no body: *Meekness* is of a reconciling Nature, it tames the most ferine disposition, and is the very Cement of Society.

*Aristotle* tells a Story of a Father, who had been undutiful to his own Parents in his Youth, and was himself so served by a Son of his in his old age; who having drag'd the Old man as far as the door, with an intention to have turn'd him out; *Hold boy*, says the unfortunate Sire, *let me go now; for so far, I remember, I drag'd my Father.* He acknowledg'd the justice of the thing, *εἰς τὸν αἶμα καὶ τὸν ὄφθαλμον.* It is as unjust and as unlikely, that he who is quiet himself, should be disturbed by others.

Object.

It is true indeed (which is the *Objection* I mentioned) God does many times by his secret Providence suffer wicked men by their Malice to vex and harass the *Meek*, to turn them out of their earthly Possessions, nay and their Lives too, and to shorten their days. And we may have observed that in Civil wars the *Obedient* are the greatest sufferers, whilst Rebels and turbulent movers of Seditions thrive and prosper. This however is true in the general, and ordinarily holds good, though there may be some particular Exceptions to the Rule. But we answer:

Hebr. 5. 8.

1. God permits this for their Exercise, to try whether they will stick to Duty in the midst of Losses and Discouragements. When he sent his own Son into the World, he was to learn Obedience by the things that he suffered; he was sent purposely to suffer, and was cut off in the midst of his Age and Strength, as the first Man fell.

2. For

2. For improvement of Grace; Thus was it with our late blessed *Sovereign Martyr*, who came nearest to his great Master's pattern, both for the indignity and meekness of his Sufferings, of all that we can meet with in Story: which the Church in her Office solemnly and thankfully acknowledges.

3. For accumulation of Reward; He makes them large amends hereafter, and then to be sure makes his Promise good; nay, he makes it good here: for he does not leave them destitute. His Promise was, they should have a *Hundredfold* in this Life; but how? *μετὰ διωγμῶν, with Persecutions*, in the midst of which he furnishes and supplies them with inward Supports and gracious Refreshments and blessed Assurances of an everlasting Inheritance. That is the last Argument. Mar. 10. 30.

4. Fourthly; *Peace before him*. It was a good Caution *Solon* gave, that we should not pronounce rashly of any man's Condition as long as he lived, but should stay to see what end he made. *Ὅσα τὰ τέλη, Mind the end*. He is a happy man, and none but he that makes a happy end. That is a blessed person of whom we can say in the Psalmist's language, *The end of that Man is peace*. Such is this meek one. Psal. 37. 37.

He has a large Scene of Tranquillity before him, and is vouchsafed, even whilst here, a *Pisgah-sight* of his *Canaan*, he is going to, though he be with *Moses* denied it here.

There it is indeed, in Heaven I mean, where there is *length of days* and the *Land of the living*; and if his temporal Inheritance chance to fail him, there 'tis largely recompens'd; and if his Life be shortned here, it is but to anticipate his Happiness, and to give him the earlier admission into Life everlasting.

To apply by way of Information, Direction, and Reproof.

I. To Inform us; *Christian Religion is no sheepish thing*, notwithstanding this character of meekness. For in the first place, what greater Generosity and Gallantry, then to conquer himself, to triumph over his brutish Passions?

*Fortior est, qui se, quàm qui fortissima vincit.*

Further, Religion doth not extirpate, but cure the Passions, and apply them to right purposes, and direct them by fair means. This Meekness then is not the utter Extirpation of Anger, since we may be angry and not sin, but sometimes accompanied with the greatest courage and resolution. Eph. 4. 26.

*Moses* the meekest man upon Earth, yet in *Corah's* case what Zeal and Fervour doth he shew? *Come away from these wicked mens Tents*. If these men die (saith he) the common Death of all men, then God has not sent me; and presently the Earth swallowed up him and his Complices. Were these Methods of Meekness? might one say. Why? what was the matter? *Corah* was a *Levite*, a true son of the Church, and *Two hundred and Fifty Princes* of the Congregation on his side. I; but he was an undutiful Son, he aim'd at the Mitre too, and would not own *Episcopal* authority, nor pay obedience to *Aaron* his Diocesan. One would think he should have come to them and fairly bespoke them; No, Government was in danger, and *Moses* was obliged to stand by the authority of his Commission. Numb. 16. 25.

Gal. 3. 1.

So S. Paul to the *Galatians*; he calls them Fools; and asks them, *Who had bewitched them?* Are these terms of *Meekness*? Had the *Apostle* forgot that character, which himself gives of charity, 1 Cor. 12. that it *bears all things*, that it *hopes all things*, and that it *doth not behave it self unseemly*? No surely: but he finds himself obliged with sharp reproofs to vindicate the authority of his ministerial Office.

Deut. 25. 4.

It is an old Rule, that the *Ox must not be muzzled*. It is to be feared, that many would be content to have the *Oxen*, labouring *Ministers*, muzzled. It is well if legal Ministers barely get what is their due by Law. The Prophet calls us *Dogs* too. We are well pleased with the name, to be dogs of the Flock under the great Shepherd. But if the *Oxen* must be muzzled, the *Dogs* must not, I hope. We are dogs to bark and bite too, when occasion requires, though the Wolf come in sheeps cloathing; else we shall be but *dumb dogs*.

Isa. 56. 10.

## II. To Direct in stating two Cases.

1. Of *Obedience to the Church*, of which we spoke somewhat before.

Two things we observ'd mainly considerable, *Truth* and *Peace*. If it be not *Heretical* in *Doctrine*, not *superstitious* in *Worship*; what should hinder our compliance, our *conformity*? If it were so, and exacted *Communion* upon such sinful terms, we ought to dispose our selves cheerfully to suffer, not to disobey Laws which are design'd to preserve Peace.

Nay, a *Dispensation* or *Connivance* in this case, though it may suspend the *Penalty*, yet cannot acquit the *Guilt* of disobedience; since 'tis that *Law* commands our obedience, by which our Sovereign wears his *Crown*, and we enjoy our *Estates*.

Rom. 13. 2.

So that to disobey such *Laws* is to *resist Authority*, and what lies in us to bring all things back into confusion; and what will become of such, I leave to themselves to judge; the *Apostle* tells them plainly, *they shall receive damnation*.

Matth. 18. 22.

2. Of *bearing with Injuries*. Our Saviour has resolv'd it to *seventy times seven*, and yet

*First*, 'Tis lawful, even upon *private Wrongs*, to demand *satisfaction*, and go to Law for it too. For what were *Laws* made for, but to determine rights that lye in Question? and further *Christian Charity* it self seems in some cases to require it, in order to God's pardoning of our offending Brother; for that is a sure old Rule, *Non dimittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum*; that Forgiveness is not to be had at his hands, without satisfaction first made; for God will hardly pardon any one to the wrong of a third party.

Matth. 21. 12.

*Secondly*, 'Tis necessary for *Authority* to vindicate it self in punishing the Disobedient. Thus *Moses*, *Paul*, exerted their authority. *Personal affronts* and *Injuries* indeed may be past by, but where through the *Person* they strike at the *Function* and *Authority* it self; those who are invested with those characters, are to maintain them to the utmost, least *Meekness*, by giving way to *Insolence*, turn into *Pusillanimity*; and where the Honour of God or the Interest of his Church is concern'd, their *Meekness* it self is to be inflamed with a holy *Zeal*, which the meekest of men, even our blessed *Jesus* himself, shewed this day in scourging those who prophaned the Temple.



III. To Reprove. 'Tis one of the *Anabaptists* Tenets, that *Dominion is founded in grace*; and that therefore they, as being the *Meek* ones, to whom this Promise of *inheriting the Earth* was made, have a Right to all other mens Estates.

This is pernicious Doctrine, such as *Christ* never own'd, such as none that were true followers of him ever practis'd. And what Disorder must such persuasions needs produce in the World, since every the worst and vilest of *Seets* make it their solemn pretence, that they and none but they are the *Godly party*, the *people of God*? And indeed this hath been constantly the bottom of all such mens designs, though faced with *religion* and *liberty*.

I need not go so far as *Munster* in *Germany* for an instance. What has been acted in late years upon the *English* stage, has sufficiently convinced it.

But let them tell me; Was this the spirit of *Meekness*, to murder, to plunder, &c. and to act such things as even honest *Heathenism* would blush at? or is it still any sign of *Meekness*, to disobey *Authority*, to speak evil of *Dignities*, and to separate themselves from the *Church*, upon I know not what frivolous Exceptions and groundless Cavils?

O may never our remissness bring us to a fresh Experience and second Trial of what the sad Consequents will be of such *Principles* and *Practices*.

We shall conclude in a word with some *Cautions* against carnal *Anger*, *Animosity* and peevish *Discontent*; and those taken partly from *Duty* and partly from *Interest*.

1. From *Duty*: 'Tis that which mainly offends God. He loves a troubled but not a troublesome spirit. *The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.* It is not allowable even in God's own cause; *Will ye be partial for God?* says *Job*; he needs it not. *Vengeance* is his, and we affront him when we take the *Sword* out of his hand. Therefore *Moses*, though he did well in *Corah's* business, (for that was the concern of Government:) yet so highly displeased God by interposing his *Passion*, when the People murmur'd for water, that he kept him out of the promised Land; for this was a natural necessity, and was to be supplied with *Miracle*.

James 1. 20.

Job 13. 8.

Deut. 32. 35.

Psal. 106. 33.

2. From *Interest*, and that either *natural* or *civil*; or *spiritual* and *eternal*.

From the very interest of *nature*; in that by our *passions* we disquiet and hurry our selves. Hence they are called the *perturbations* of Mind. They cloud Reason and discompose a man for all Duties, and transform him into a Savage creature.

Again upon a *Civil* account. The passionate man never wants *Wo*, and the Disobedient *non dimidiabunt dies suos*, shall not live out half their days, but shall, either by publick Justice, or extraordinary Providence, be cut off with untimely Deaths. Every body will be at him, whose hand is against every body; as 'tis said of *Ishmael*: and as in the case of *Adonibezek*; it being but reasonable, that those who are troublesome to others, should from their own Example expect the like at others hands.

Psal. 55. 23.

Gen. 15. 12.

Judg. 1. 7.

Lastly,

REV. 21. 8.

Lastly, In regard of our *spiritual* and *eternal* concerns. This *Wrath* and *Revenge* looses the favour of God, and hazards our Inheritance hereafter: as the *fearful*, so the passionate will be shut out of Heaven; whereas the *Meek* and Quiet and Obedient ones shall have God's Protection here, and his Reward hereafter, shall have length of days *on the Land which the Lord their God giveth them*, as 'tis in the *Fifth Commandment*; and *everlasting Life* in the Land of the living.

For which *Inheritance*, God by his Grace and Spirit of *Meekness* prepare us all through *Jesus Christ*. Amen.

*Abraham*

# *Abraham sacrificing his Son; or The Triumphs of Faith.*

A Sermon Preached at S. Peters Westminster,  
Jan. 10. 167 $\frac{4}{5}$ .

Gen. XXII. 10.

*And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the Knife to slay his Son.*



E are in the Story of *Abraham's* offering up his Son, who upon God's special command, in the beginning of the *Chapter*, took his Son *Isaac* along with him into the Land of *Moriab*, and there upon one of the Mountains having built an Altar, and laid the wood in order upon it, bound this Son of his, and laid him on the Altar upon the wood, as 'tis in the foregoing *Verse*; and then with a full intent of making him the Sacrifice, he stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay him.

Now this act of *Abraham*, as it was on the *One* hand the highest Evidence of his Heroick Faith, so reckon'd *Hebr. 11. 17.* and that, upon which *S. James* lays the stress of his Justification, *James 2. 21.* so on the *Other* hand it appears, to the sense of Nature and the Wisdom of the *Flesh*, so barbarous and unnatural an attempt, that any Father should upon whatever pretence design the death of his Son, and be himself with his own hand the principal and only Actor in so bloody a Tragedy; that it may justly deserve some time and thought to reconcile the contradictory resentments and reasonings of *Faith* and *Nature*, and to adjust the different Principles and Apprehensions of *Humanity* and *Divinity* upon this Subject.

Which to do I shall pursue this Method.

1. I shall orderly lead you along to the *Occasion*, and there lay down in brief the *Inducements* and *Obligations*, founded upon no less than *divine Authority*, which prevailed with this Holy man to attempt so strange an Action.

2. I shall present you with some of those many *Arguments* and *Objections*, which carnal *Reason* and natural *Affection* and even *Religion* it self might, and questionless did, lay in his way to deterr him from such an Undertaking.



3. I shall display the *Trophees* and *Triumphs* of his glorious *Faith*, which, conquering all Prejudices, and marring all Difficulties, bravely stood the Trial, which God had put it upon, and was ready to have exprest and justified it self in an act of so Exemplary *Obedience*, where the thing commanded was so directly contrary to *Flesh and Blood*.

4. And then in the *last* place I shall draw hence some *practical Considerations*, to the Instruction and Improvement, to the Benefit and Comfort of all true Believers, who tread in the footsteps of father *Abraham's Faith*; which may serve for *Use and Application*.

I. *Abraham's Story* is so well known to every one, that knows any thing of Scripture, that I shall not need to enlarge upon it. I shall therefore draw it up into a very brief account.

He was one of the rarest Instances, we can meet with, of all *Temporal* and *Spiritual* blessings, as if he had been designed for the prime *Favourite* of Heaven.

He was heaped with all worldly Advantages; of that *Wealth* and *Authority*, that he was fear'd and courted by all the neighbour Princes.

Gen. 14. 14,  
15. 15.

His *Power* was sufficiently witnessed by that one Action, wherein, for the Rescue of his captive Kinsman *Lot*, he defeated *five Kings* at once, with the assistance only of his own Train-bands, the Servants of his own Family.

1 Pet. 3. 6.

His *Wife*, a *Princess* (for so her Name imports) besides the Indowments of her Mind and that gracious Spirit, which made her so excellent, that she became, as the *Joy* of her Husband, so the *Pattern* of her Sex, had those outward Adornments of an attractive *Beauty*, which mixed with Characters of *Vertue*, made her at once be loved and revered, charm'd the Eyes and the Hearts of all that saw her.

What should I reckon up his *Herd*s and *Flocks*, his large *Possessions* and numerous *Retinue*?

Chron. 20. 7.

Nor were his *spiritual Privileges* inferiour, as having been vouchsafed frequent Intercourses with Heaven, *Visions*, *Apparitions* of *Angels*, *Interviews* and *Conferences* with God himself, the Father of Spirits, who graced him with peculiar Favours, entred into Covenant with him, and engaged him in a strict League of amity, that he deserved to be styled *The Friend of God*; a Title of that Dignity, that no mortal ever wore but he.

Thus was he possesst of all sorts of *Happiness*; all, that Man can wish, or God is wont to give.

And yet see no *felicity* perfect and compleat in this World. The want of one *blessing* makes him reflect upon himself, as *Unhappy* in the midst of all the rest.

Gal. 4. 28.  
Rom. 4. 11.

Lord God, saith he, *what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?* There was nothing wanting but a *Child*, and that want is at length supplied, first by the Son of the *Bondswoman*, to try his Content and exercise his Faith a while longer, till at last, beyond all Hope, to his extream Joy, *Isaac* is born to him in his old age, as to natural Affection his *Darling*; and, which was an Indearment of another nature far transcending all the rest, the Pledge of a *Saviour*, the *Son of the Promise*, which justly intituled him *The Father of the Faithful*.

And

And yet these *Blessings* (which is God's constant Method to those he loves best) were constantly checkered with various *Troubles*: Amidst these *Advantages*, he had several *Trials* and *Exercises* befall him; to intimate that there's no *Crown* without its *Cross*, nor *Reward* to be expected without *Service*. God's love to his children and servants is severe; he does *fortiter amare*; nor must the *Patriarchs* friendship excuse him from sufferings and hardships.

His *Wealth*, as vast as it was, consisted all in *Moveables*: he was a *Sojourner*, nor could he call a foot of that Land he travelled in his own; any further, then his *Faith* intitled him; nor do we read, he purchased ought in the promised Land, but a *burial-place*, wherein he was to take possession of the Promise.

This the first *Instance* of his *Obedience*, that at God's call he quit his own Country, and chose a Pilgrim's life.

Nor was this all; he was to be tried in his nearest and dearest *Concerns*.

His *Wives* Beauty, through *Abimelech's* mistake and his own distrust, who never till now discover'd so much weakness, prov'd such a snare, that it had like to have been the overthrow of her Vertue, and the ruin of his Life.

But now *ad triarios ventum est*. This is such an *Instance*, as will bring his *Faith* and his *Providence*, all his *Vertues* and *Fortunes* together to the Test. Now his *Son*, the son of his Old age, the son of the Promise is to be parted with; and how? to be killed by his own hand; He is to imbrue his aged hands in the child's blood: This may justly seem a hard *Command*, a very strange *Injunction* of God, and that upon a Friend, his friend *Abraham*.

However, which was the *Inducement* and *Obligation* of his most ready obedience, he is perfectly convinced that he *may* do't with a clear and safe Conscience, nay *must* do it, because God commands. And what God thinks fit to command, he dares act, he dares not but act. He knows that God is *Lord of Life and Death*, and submits to his pleasure. He concludes it but reasonable, that he who gave, may take away, and how or in what manner he please; He has his order, and is resolved to obey.

Nor does the strangeness of the *thing commanded* startle his *Faith*, or discourage his *Obedience*. He is sure 'twas *בְּחֻקִּי*, the voice of God himself that bad him do it, such an authentick way of discovering the divine Will, as he had been used to, and he dares not question the *Authority*, nor dispute the *Matter* of the *Command*.

And though according to the *Laws of Nature* such an Action as this might well be censured as a horrible *Murder*, yet he resolves God's *Sovereignty* may make an alteration in the *Laws of Nature*, and that a *particular Command* supercedes a *general*.

Wherefore he is well satisfied in his *Conscience*, that his obedience is so far from being sinful, that that which otherwise without Command might justly be lookt on, as a cruel unnatural *Massacre*, would now by God's Command and Acceptance be consecrated into a well-pleasing *Sacrifice*, and an act of the highest Devotion.

This to satisfy his Conscience ; and when that was satisfied, he found it no hard matter to quiet his *Mind* ( besides other Arguments ) from that very Satisfaction. The Assurance of his *Faith* led along his *Reason* into just Persuasions of the equity of the thing. That resolved it necessary for him to obey , and thus in compliance concluded it fit.

For, however strange the Act might appear at first to *human Reason*, yet reason it self, being assisted with *Faith*, would presently determine it on God's side, that *Human* reason ought to give place to the *Divine*.

And then further , his very *Reason* would suggest to him, that God had otherwise blest him ; and since it pleased God, the Author of all the Blessings he enjoyed, to call for the choicest of them back again ; He, who was wont to offer to him in ordinary Sacrifices the very best of his Flocks and Herds, would not grudge the dearest thing he had, upon this extraordinary Trial, which God thought worthy of his Acceptance.

And again, his *Faith* assured him, that as God at first brought this Son of his out of a *dead womb* beyond all likelihoods of Nature , so he could as well raise him from the dead. And that upon this Consideration, that God's promise must stand and be made good ; and that therefore the Child of the Promise, if he must dye, he must also be raised to a new Life again ; seeing that in his Person only the Promise was to be fulfilled.

Upon the whole debate , *Abraham* is resolved not to be wanting to his Duty, since he knew God could not be wanting to his own Word and Honour ; and is very well contented, that God should take his own ways to secure and provide for his own Designs.

II. And yet we cannot imagine, that, *Abraham* being made of Flesh and Blood, this satisfaction of *Conscience* and acquiescence of *Mind* was attain'd without a great many rubs and *Objections*, which his parental *Affection*, worldly *Polity*, common *Morality*, and even his *Faith* it self, would lay in his way ; which is our second Head.

It may be supposed, as he was a *loving Father*, a *kind Husband*, a *prudent, virtuous and religious Man*, there was some struggle and reluctancy in his pious breast , e're he came up to a full resolution. I appeal to all Persons, who have any sense of those *Instincts* of love, which Nature hath implanted in the Hearts of *Parents* towards their *Children* ; what amazing *passions* they would be surprized with in such an Instance. Nor shall I undertake to dress up the *Scene* with all such *Tragical* circumstances and expressions, as would besit such a Subject.

'Tis enough, if I draw the *Pourtraiture* of those astonishing *Griefs*, with which these sad *Obsequies* would have been attended, in little ; or rather, if I imitate that *Painter*, who was to picture *Agamemnon*, in the like case, standing by the Altar when his daughter *Iphigenia* was to be sacrificed ; ( a *Poetick fiction* borrowed possibly from this *sacred Story*, as may be guessed by the sequel of it, a *Hart* being there substituted for her , as here a *Ram* for *Isaac* ) who thought it the best way to express the Fathers sorrowful Countenance was to conceal it, and drew him with a *Vail* over his face as in close Mourning.



1. First *Nature*, the common Parent of us all, out of an extream abhorrence of the bloody intended Fact, comes in with loud cries.

Father Abraham, what about to do? to kill thy Son? If thou hast no pity for his tender years, consider thy own gray hairs. O do not stain them with such a cruelty, as the most Savage beasts are ignorant of, who are all taught by Me to love and cherish their young! such a cruelty, as nothing under my Dominion can be guilty of, not the very insensible Creatures, who none of them destroy their own Productions! What more then Tiger-disposition? What more then Rock-hardiness has possess'd thy heart? Children are parts of their Parents, and by offering violence to thy Son, Madman-like thou tear'st and manglest thy own Limbs. What Religion has taught thee to be thus unnatural, and to disobey my Laws, by which the whole World is govern'd and kept in order?

But the God of Nature had commanded him, and he knows that Nature herself is at his Command.

2. Whilst *Nature* is speaking, in comes *Conjugal-love*, that Duty which he owed to Sarah, and ow'd it the more, because she was a dutiful Wife to him, calling him Lord; and if that of the Roman custom hold good, *Ubi tu Cajus, Ego Cuius*: where he was Lord, she was Lady.

No Rhetorick can express what this Love would say.

Hold Man! how has Sarah deserved to be thus highly and irreparably disobliged? If he were thy Son alone, thou might'st with some Reason dispose of him; but now she has the greater share in him. 'Tis her Isaac, and thou art so far from having her Consent, that the very Proposal, the very Apprehension would have broke her Heart. Did she part with him for a weeks absence to bear thee Company in thy Journey, that she might see him no more? How many deaths will the sad News of his procure her? how will her laughter be turned into perpetual and remediless Mourning? and if she should ever be recovered out of those Agonies and Swoons, which this surprize will cast her into, what amends can ever be made her, to reconcile her either to Thee or to Life? Is this the Son, whom with your joint Prayers you so oft desired and at last obtained of Heaven, that thou might'st make him away to make way for the Son of the Bondswoman? Was this the Reason thou saidst, Let Ishmael live; though Isaac dye for it? O how much more happy had Sarah been, had she always continued barren! Gen. 17. 18.

But, says Abraham; Isaac is neither my child nor hers, but the Child of the Promise; and since God resumes his Promise, I resolve to venture it in his hands.

3. Of all Arguments that could be used to put Abraham by this stern Resolution, no one could be of more powerful address then the Presence of Isaac himself, whose Years, whose Innocence, whose Dutifulness would have made the hardest Nature have relented, but that Faith had steel'd his Fathers breast, and would have caused the Weapon to fall out of his hand, but that God had put it there: and no less power was to disarm Abraham, then that which had given him Commission.

Isaac

Verse 7.

Isaac all the while was ignorant of his Fathers design, and as Ignorance is the cause of *Admiration*, he marvelled what he was going to do: Father, says he, *here is the Wood and the Fire; where is the Lamb?*

Verse 8.

*Dear child, thy Lamb-like innocence has fitted thee to be the Sacrifice; thy Father has told thee true, God will provide himself.*

Still there's more Considerations about Isaac. He was his only Child, to be the Comfort and Support of his *Old age*; and not only so, but of his *Family* too; the Inheritor of his Estate. And in lopping off him, he cuts down to the root all his worldly hopes.

But where God was to be obeyed, *Abraham* thought not fit to take the *World* and the *Flesh* into Consultation.

4. Those reasons which *Affection* and *Policy* might prompt, if they were less prevalent, are seconded by *Religion* it self, and *Nature* is assisted in her plea by *Moral Principles*.

Gen. 18.25.

*What, Abraham? is thy God to be serv'd with sin? and such a sin, as is of the deepest dy, the Murther of a Son? hast thou no way left to express thy Piety, but by an act of the highest Impiety? If God must have thy Son, why by the mockery of a Sacrifice? why thou to be the Butcher-Priest? He knows that every thing thou hast, the dearest of thy Injoyments and Concerns, is at his Service; only think of some other Method of presenting him, or at least, if nothing but Life will serve, do not thou, who art his Father, be the Executioner of so severe a Sentence. Thou couldst plead for the wicked Sodomites; shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right? and hast thou nothing to say in behalf of thy Innocent Son? Besides, what scandal will this Action of thine bring upon thy Profession? and how will it justify Heathen-Idolaters, who will perhaps from thy Example learn to practise such Cruelties in their Worship?*

Gen. 22. 18.

*Above and beyond all, that has been or can be said upon the account of Religion, this Son of thine is he, whom all Mankind is concerned in, he in whom all the Nations of the Earth expect to be blessed. Thou art now with that Knife going to cut off that Intail of blessing, to ruin with this Action of Waste the Hopes of all Posterities; to turn out all true Religion out of Nature, the Jewish and the Christian; to destroy, what lies in thee, the Saviour of the World, who is to come from thy Loins, and by the over-violent acting of thy Obedience, to overthrow the very ground of thy Faith.*

But *Abraham* had received a plain Command from God, and therefore, without prying into his Counsels, left himself to him, who he knew (such is his *Power*) could do what he pleased, and (such his *Goodness*) would do all for the best, and (such his *Wisdom*) was able to answer those Objections he could not.

III. Without question many, if not most, if not all, of these Thoughts, and more too, exercised the Heart and Soul of pious *Abraham* in his three days march to this service; for therefore, 'tis likely, God ordered him to that distance, that he might have time to consider; and that his *Faith* encountering with so many doubts and jealousies, which his *Affections* and *Reason* and *Religion* to boot might suggest to him, might prove the more Victorious.

*Conquests* are easie, where there is no Resistance; nor is Obedience so acceptable, where there are no Temptations to disobey. And so it is said, *verse 1.* that *God tempted him*, that is, tried him with a Command, and put him upon a piece of Duty, wherein he would meet with much difficulty.

And yet see the Glories of a *triumphant Faith*, which soars so high a flight, above the apprehensions of *Sense*, and the discourses of *Reason*.

*Suidas*, a Greek Author of good credit tells us, *Abraham* was a great Student of *Astronomy*, that being one considerable piece of *Chaldee* learning, in all which our *Patriarch* was well versed; so it seems, God calls him out, bids him *tell the Stars*: but he with his *Jacob's Staff* Gen. 15. 5. went higher then the *Ætherial Orbs*. He knew, whatever became of his Son *Isaac*, that God was able to make good his Promise, that his seed should be as the Stars of Heaven; and therefore tramples upon all *Sublunary* considerations.

The *discontents* of a mournful Family at home, the *disappointments* of succession in the *Inheritance* of his Name and Fortunes, the *censures* of a reproachful World, the seeming defeat of God's promise of conveying the blessed Seed through his Loins, which Promise had been before appropriated to the person of his Son *Isaac*; all the *hazards*, he must have run, had he done that, which he was now upon, were nothing to stand in the way of his *Faith*, which lookt beyond all these selfish Considerations, and bottom'd it self upon God's Will alone: whatever was to befall *Abraham*, *Sarah*, *Isaac*, his whole Family, his Religion, his *Salvour*; he resolves to obey God, what're come on't, and God, he knows, will look to his own Designs, and he is very well content he should do it his own way.

So generous and frank, so noble and brave a Grace is *Faith*, that it stops or shrinks at nothing, but goes on through all Disadvantages and Prejudices, and closes with God upon his own Terms; and though it willingly limit it self within God's Will, yet nothing else shall bound it, and flies in his Service out of the Ken of all probability.

In this act, *Faith* was not only to have slain *Isaac*, but to have murdered *Charity*, (yea *Hope*, and it self too.)

Observe with me again, as this *Faith* of *Abraham's* carries him on with Courage and Vigour, so it brings him off with answerable Success. When it comes to the push of acting, in the eye of Human reason, thus desperately, God interposes, not to give it a *Foil* in its Enterprize, but to *Crown* its Intention with acceptance.

I say, when God found by this Trial, that his friend *Abraham* was Faithful and Obedient to the severest Command that a gracious God could lay upon a pious Parent, he accepted the Sincerity of his Intention, and excused the strangeness of the Act.

Thus his ready *Faith* brought him off *incruentâ victoriâ*, with a Victory without blood. For it was God's gracious Intent only to try him, not to let him do it; and it was *Abraham's* serious Intention to have done it, had not God (who gave the Command) remanded him.

See then how, when he was just ready to have put the Knife to his Son's throat, and questionless to his own Hopes and Heart too; God, who is as forward to relieve *Innocence*, as he is to accept of *Obedience*, Hof. 6. 5. and who tells us for both, that he delights in Mercy rather than Sacrifice, 1 Sam. 15. 22. and



and that to Obey is better then Sacrifice; he sends his Angel to stay the Old man's hand, and to save the Young man's life. O then, sluggish *Faith of mine!* hadst thou but a Disposition, but an Inclination, to act great things for thy God, though it lay out of thy power to perform thy intentions, what hopes wouldst thou give me of a good God's acceptance of thee, and me with thee, in all our Imperfections?

Will *Abraham* part with his Son? Nay then he shall keep him; then I will renew my Promise to him; and so the *Angel* did; for after he had secured the child's Life, and declared God's acceptance of his Sincerity: Verse 12. Now know I, saith he, that thou fearest God, in that thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me; he calls to him a second time out of Heaven; Verse 15, 16. By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for that thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy Son; In blessing I will bless thee, and in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed; because thou hast obey'd my Voice.

And hence it appears, as S. *James* gathers it, that *Abraham's* Faith and his Person both were justified; Now, he tells us, it was, that his James 2.21, 23. Faith was imputed unto him for Righteousness.

Well then, *Christian*, dost thou believe, as *Abraham* did? and canst thou obey, as he did? otherwise thy Faith is not a justifying Faith. Here's that which acquitted *Abraham* in the sight of God, and must proportionably acquit us all.

IV. Come along with me, *Believer*, and Try thy Faith by this Example; bring thy self to the Test, to know whether thou beest a right son of *Abraham*.

Canst thou resign up thy All to God? canst thou, at his call and for his sake, part with thy dearest Injoyments, with thy Life and all the Comforts of it, with all thy present Happiness and the Hopes of future Bliss; and leave God to the Performance of his Promises in his own way? Canst thou believe beyond hope and against hope? Canst thou trust in him, as Rom. 4. 18. Job did, though he kill thee? For this, and more of this kind thou must do, if thou wouldst deserve the name of a true Believer.

Nothing will serve turn, but an intire Resignation of thy whole self, thy Carnal self, thy Worldly self, nay thy Religious self too.

Our Saviour has set his Religion upon these terms; He that hates not Luke 11. 26. Father and Mother, &c. cannot be my disciple. Why? dear Saviour, must we strip our selves of our natural Affections? cannot we be kind and dutiful to thee, without shewing unkindness to those, whom all ties and obligations have endeared to us? Yes; if occasion so require, we must be ready, not only to part with all, but to throw them off, and look upon them as loss and dung in comparison of him, should they prove hindrances to his Service.

When any of these, Father, Mother, Brother and Sister, House or Land, Ordinances themselves, nay Heaven it self comes in competition with that love we should have for him, we must deny them all, all that we may be any way concern'd in, to express our love to him.

And now what can we say? when *Abraham* was thus ready to kill his Son, shall not we be willing to mortifie a sin, to sacrifice a lust? O, if it be so, we fall far short of *Abraham's* faith.

2. For in the next place, let us learn for our Instruction, from this Instance of *Abraham*, that our Faith is no right genuine Faith, if it do not express and evidence it self by obediential acts. This use S. *James* makes

makes of it in his second Chapter ; *Was not Abraham our father, says he, justified by Works, when he had offered his son Isaac upon the Altar?* 'Twas not his bare believing God's Promises made to him, but this eminent Act of obedience in offering up the son of the Promise, that justified him. Hence he infers, *Seest thou how Faith wrought with his works, and by works was made perfect?* It was his obedience to God's Commands made good his Belief of the Promises. Verse 26.

*Faith* in the Promises will not save us without an obedience to the Commands. How does he prove this, that *Abraham* was justified thus? And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, *Abraham believed God; and it was imputed to him for Righteousness.* Why? that Scripture was set down *Gen. 15.* before this trial; I, but 'twas not fulfilled till now, it seems; and hereupon it follows, that *he was called the Friend of God.* Verse 23.

*Friends* indeed have a mutual Confidence in one another; but that's not all the business of *Friendship*; it consists in offices of love, in a perfect Resignation of all Interests, that may serve a friend; else 'tis no *Friendship*, but a thing of Civility and Complement only, or of Design and Advantage, when we expect all service at their hands and return none; nor make out our Love in real acts of kindness, even to the hazard of our own Concerns to serve them.

Well then; the *Apostles* are well enough agreed. *S. Paul* pleads for Justification by *Faith without Works*, that is, *Works of the Law*, as well he might; for *Abraham* was before that. *S. James*, who writes after, explains his brother *Paul*, that this *Faith*, which is to justify us, must be a *working faith*, and is itself justified by works. Here's no difference between the two *Apostles*. To reconcile them, 'tis but bringing them together: *by Faith*, says one; *by Works*, says the other; by both, say we; that is, by a working faith. Rom. 3. 28.

And these acts of obedience, the higher they are, the greater demonstrations they are of a lively faith, as here *Abraham's* offering his son.

3. But then for a just *Reproof*, this Example of *Abraham* doth not at all justify the outrages and extravagancies of a groundless Zeal and wild Enthusiasm. Because *Abraham* upon a special Command from God, would have kill'd his son; therefore shall it be lawful for any fanatick Zealot, upon pretence of a Commission from God, to massacre his Governours, to murder his Relations; as *John of Leyden* and his party did at *Munster*; and all, as if they had the same express Command from Heaven for these Villanies, as *Abraham* had for sacrificing his son.

No; these are so far from being Instances of *Faith*, Evidences of an Evangelical temper; that they are rather to be lookt on as diabolical Illusions, and the highest Affronts to the Gospel.

We cannot forget; we have had some amongst Us, that have not been far behind them in these Exorbitances. But if any such there be, Patrons and Abettors, fomenters and adherents of that wicked Cause fattered in these late ill times upon God, the worst I wish them, I pray God they may repent and leave off, that God may forgive them, as the Publick has done.

4. To come off to nearer Concerns; for I hope, God in Mercy will never bring us upon such Trials again: May his will be done, whatever it be; but may never men of such irregular Principles ever have their will. But fall the worst that can; let us comfort our selves from this passage of *Isaac's* escape. Now when the Knife was at his throat, an

*Angel* is sent from Heaven with a Reprieve; and because *Abraham* is so ready to offer up his son, his son is restored to him.

God in our greatest distresses can relieve us, and usually our *Extremity* is his *Opportunity*; and as our times are in his hands, so the times of trouble are his most seasonable times. He's ever ready at hand in the needful time of trouble.

Art thou beset with dangers, surrounded with difficulties on the right hand and on the left? keep thy *Faith* steady, hold thy self to God, look up from whence thy help cometh; God will either *deliver* thee out of thy Sufferings, or *support* and strengthen thee under them.

Now when thou hast no expectation of succour, when thou laiest down all thy Concerns and all thy Hopes too at God's feet, he will take care of thee, nor shalt thou be a loser by him upon any account; but he will assist thy generous *Faith* in the acts of its *obedience*, and will graciously accept it, and highly reward it.

Hebr. 11. 19.

*Abraham* accounted, that God was able to raise up *Isaac* from the dead, had he been let go on, and done as he was bid; and thereupon, though the Son of Promise, was content to give him up; and God came in *ἀπὸ νεκρῶν*, and spared his Life, when it was under the edge of the Razor.

Matth. 19. 29.

Matth. 16. 25.

Art thou willing to venture thy all for God? do not fear, entertain no distrust of his Goodness; it shall not be to thy disadvantage even in this Life, thy Saviour has so promised; *a hundredfold* here; and be assured, that the way to *save thy Life*, or what else, is *to lose it*; that is, to wear it so loosely, as to be ready to lay it down and part with it, if God call for it. For he is faithful to his *Promises*, and will not, cannot deceive thee; be thou but faithful to thy *Duty*, and constant in thy *Faith*.

Rom. 8. 32.

5. And then *lastly* for thy further Comfort and Confirmation of thy faith, Consider, that he who gave thee *his Son*, his only begotten Son, *will with him give thee all things*.

Hebr. 11. 19.

This act of father *Abraham* was but a *Type* of God the Father's offering up his only Son; so in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* he received him in a *Figure*.

Hold, *Abraham*; stay thy hand; meddle not with the Lad. Why? was not *Abraham* in earnest? Yes; he had bound him, laid him on the *Altar*, and had now taken up the knife to slay him. What is the matter then? Was not God in earnest, who bade him do it? Yes too; God bid him do it to try him, and saw he was resolved to do it, had not he stopt him. But God bade him only for Trial.

Hold then, *Abraham*; go no further; it is enough what thou hast already done to shew thy obedience. There's more to be done, which thou art not to do. God will not suffer himself to be out-acted by thee in friendship. What thou intendest to do, 'tis God himself will really put in Execution; who, when time shall come, will send his only begotten Son to descend from the Loins of thee and this thy son *Isaac*, and shall bring him to this very Mountain, and lay him on the *Altar* of the *Cross*, and, when the nails and spear and other cruel Instruments of his death are provided, shall send no *Angel* to stop proceedings, but shall deliver him up, and leave him to himself, to expiate the sins of men, and to acquit his own Obedience.

See, *Abraham*, by thy *Faith*, how God himself follows thy Example, and outdoes it. Thou clavest the wood for the Burnt-offering, and laidst it upon thy Son to carry it, and wentst along with him, having the fire and



and the *knife* in thy hand. But, thanked be God, when thou camest to the Trial, thy Son was rescued, and a *Ram*, caught in the thicker, providentially lodged there for the purpose, was taken in his stead. But God, when he brought his own Son to it, would admit of no such Exchange. He laid the wood upon him, and forced him to carry his own *Cross*, till his strength fail'd under the burthen, and another was prest to that service; and when he came to the *Altar*, was tied and nailed to it, and suffered a cruel and ignominious Death.

See how he walked along the *dolorous way*, as unconcern'd as thy Son *Isaac*, though he knew aforehand, which thy *Isaac* did not, that himself was the *Lamb* provided.

O *blessed God*! give us the faith of thy friend *Abraham*, that we may be ready to sacrifice all to thee, and may make out the *Assurance* of our *Faith* by the *obedience* of it, that thereby our persons may be justified, and our mean services accepted, for the worth of that one perfect Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction, which thy Son our *Saviour* made to thee upon the *Altar* of the *Cross*.

To whom, together with thy self and thy blessed Spirit, Three Persons and One God, be &c. *Amen.*

## The Gathering of Manna; or *Providence justified.*

A Sermon Preached at *Chelsey*, June 6.  
1675.

Exod. XVI. 18.

*And when they did mete it (that is, the Manna) with an Omer, he that gathered much, had nothing over; and he that gathered little, had no lack: they gathered every man according to his eating.*

**I**T has been a common and a true Observation, that *Fortunes bestows upon many men too much, and gives no man enough*; that is, such is the Unsatisfactoriness of all worldly things, such the Unsatisfiedness of worldly minds; that whereas some have more than they need, more than they know well what to do with, or indeed do make a right use of; on the other hand no man has so much as he desires to have, but with craving appetite is still reaching after more, never contented with that share and proportion which is allowed him. And yet it is no less true, that God Almighty's *providence* does so order matters in a peculiar Care of every individual Condition, that every man has or may have a *Sufficiency*, a *Competence*, enough to serve his turn, afforded him by ordinary means, if he have but *reason* to consider, and *grace* to know when he's well, that he may acquiesce under the Dispensations of Divine Bounty. This as to *outward* things.

And further it is as certain, that as to the necessities of our *Spiritual Life*, the same God does by his *Grace* and *Spirit* provide a like competence for the happiness of every Soul, for its participation of his Favour here, and for its preparation for his Glory hereafter.

Both these Truths may fairly be made out in the words of the *Text*; the *one* in an *Historical* sense, the *other* by way of *Allegory*; in which accommodation I shall not be single, but have several, both *Jewish* Expositors and *Christian* Writers, to go along with me and to bear me Company.

For God upon the complaint and mutiny of the People for want of bread, after the Dough which they carried with them in their kneading troughs had failed them, that having been hitherto the only provision or Victuals they had for their Journey; which happened a just Month after their departure out of *Egypt*, upon their arrival at the Wilderness of *Sin*, on the Fifteenth day of the second Month, viz. of *April*, as they came out on the fifteenth of *March*, the day after their keeping of the *Passover*: God, I say, was pleased for their supply and future Suttenance, during their march through the Wilderness, to work a great and lasting Miracle in raining down *Manna*: with the sight whereof being surprized, for they wist not what it was, *Moses* tells them, *verse 15.* that that was *the bread which the Lord had given them to eat*, and withal orders them from God's Command every ones due appointment, that they should gather of it every man according to his eating, an *Omer* a head. And then 'tis said, the children of *Israel* did so, and gathered *some more, some less.*

It seems they gather'd it by guess, and could not adjust the exact quantity in the field: But *when they did mete it with an Omer*, when they came back to their Tents, and the Master of the Family or some Officer, who was to oversee, took the account and made the particular Assignments; *be that had gathered much, had nothing over, and be that gathered little, had no lack*; it fell out pat to be the right Measure and due Proportion; *they gathered every man according to his eating*; which therefore the *Rabbins* do make one part of the Miracle; that though some gathered more and some less, yet it should so happen, that when they came to measure it, it should prove to be neither over nor under. Whereupon also they agree, that it was not only the Ignorance and Surprize of the people, by their saying in way of question, **מַה הוּא**, *What is this?* that gave it its name *Manna*; but rather that it was so called by the designation of God himself in way of Affirmation, **הוּא הוּא**, *It is a Portion*, as we find it render'd in the margin of our Bibles.

The history of the *Manna* we have at large set down in this sixteenth Chapter of *Exodus*, and again *Numb. 11. 7, 8, 9.* I shall not therefore now stand to give you a relation of the *nature, colour, taste,* and other accidents of it, but refer you thither for your Satisfaction.

That it was not an ordinary production of Nature, that which in the Shops is called *Manna* or *Ladanum*, a Honey-dew, gathered in some Countries and at some times of the year from Herbs and Plants, though in some qualities it might resemble it; but was a thing meerly of a miraculous Provision; *Abarbenel*, a learned Jew, and one of their best Interpreters proves by no less than a dozen reasons. As namely,

That the natural *Manna* was never to be found in that desert, where this fell.

That where the common *Manna* does fall, it is only in the Spring-time, in *March* and *April*; whereas this fell indifferently all the Months of the year throughout.

That the ordinary *Manna* doth not melt before the Sun, as this did, *verse 21.*

That it doth not stink and breed Worms, as this did, when kept till morning, *verse 20.*

That



That it does not melt upon the tongue, as 'tis said this did.

That it cannot be ground or beaten in a mortar, so as to make cakes of it, as this was.

That it is Medicinal, and used only for *Physick*, not for food and nutriment, as this was.

That this fell in a double proportion on the sixth day, and not at all on the *Sabbath*; which shews, it fell not naturally but by Miracle.

That this followed them in all their Journeyings, wherever they pitched their Tents.

That this ceased and left off at that very time of the year when the other uses to fall, to wit, in *March*, when they were come to *Gilgal*.

That there was an *Omer* of it to be kept for Generations to come, which was to shew the Miracle; for had it been ordinary *Manna*, there had been no need of that; and above all, which alone would carry a full conviction:

That *Moses* tells them *Deut. 8. 3.* that *God humbled them, and suffered them to hunger, and fed them with Manna, which neither they nor their Fathers before them ever knew; that he might make them know, that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word or thing that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord, that is, that is order'd and appointed by his Commission.*

All that I shall mainly insist upon in this story of the *Manna*, will be to take notice of the equal and regular Distribution of it.

1. In a *natural* sense; as this *Manna* here was a miraculous Instance of God's Provision for the sustenance of the children of *Israel*, all their forty years travel through the Wilderness, till they came into the Land of *Canaan*; and so 'tis a *Type*, or rather an *Essay* of God's ordinary *Providence* in supplying every man with a Sufficiency of the things of this Life.

2. In a *spiritual* sense; as this *Manna* was an *Embleme* of God's grace by Christ, and of the means of Salvation afforded by him; for so the Apostle makes use of it, *1 Cor. 10. 3.* where he tells us that *they all did eat the same spiritual food*; and our Saviour himself affirms once and again that it was he that was this *Manna*, that *bread which came down from Heaven*, *John 6. 33, 35, 50, 51.*

I. Naturally, to argue from extraordinary and *miraculous Provisions* to the ordinary supplies of *common Providence*, as we may and ought to do; for every *Christian*, every Believer has the same Assurance of being provided for by a gracious God with temporal Supplies in this World, as the *Israelites* had during their travel through the Wilderness; We observe, that as in the gathering of *Manna*, though some gathered more, some less; yet when they came to take the Measure of it, every one had that exact Proportion which divine Order had allotted to them; so in God's common Dispensing of the things of this life, *Providence* doth assign to every man a Competence, notwithstanding the inequality of mens several Estates.

Where I shall have first to make out, wherein that Sufficiency lies; and secondly to shew the reasons of that Inequality.

I. First,

I. First, Every man has a sufficient Proportion and a competent Assignment of outward blessings allowed him by God's goodness. As there is nothing over on the one hand, where there's the greatest abundance; so there's no lack on the other hand, where there is the greatest scarcity; if the thing be rightly considered.

'Tis an inordinate Affection and an irregular Appetite, that makes men discontented with that Condition wherein God hath placed them, and unsatisfied with that share of worldly Advantages which hath befallen them: Whereas would they practise that, which Nature as well as Grace has taught us to do; would they contract their Minds to their Fortunes, they might find themselves happy and well at ease, by seeing reason to think themselves so. For 'tis well said of Seneca; *Non est beatus, esse qui se non putat*; that Every man is happy or unhappy as they think themselves. I say, they might upon this Consideration thankfully acknowledge with the Psalmist, That the Lines are fallen to them in pleasant places, or that the Lot is fallen to them in a fair ground; *Psalm. 115. 6. Teu, that they have a goodly Heritage.*

But, now contrariwise, by enlarging their Desires they apprehend their Estate narrow, and by this means grow apt to complain of Providence for giving them no more, which they ought rather gratefully to acknowledge for having given so much; and through an ill Estimate they make of things about them, and an over-weening opinion of themselves, they absurdly deny themselves the Injoyment of what they have, by fancying they have not all they should have.

This was right the Israelites case. The Manna, God rained down among them, was so delicious a food, that it is called the food of Angels; of that strengthening Nature, that the Rabbins tell us, it went all into Nourishment, so that they expound that bread of Angels, *לחם אנגלים*, to be bread for the limbs, *cibus absumptus in membris*; and it was of that pleasure in taste, that it was like wafers made with honey. Indeed, as they also tell us, it had all manner of tastes in it, whatever those that eat it would fancy; and so it appears by that account the Wiseman gives us of it, *Wisd. 16. 20, 21.* where he says, that God fed his people with Angels food, and sent them from Heaven bread prepared without their labour, able to content every man's delight, and agreeing to every taste. Where, that we may more certainly understand his meaning, he goes on; that this Sustainance of his declared his sweetness to his children, and serving to the Appetite of the Eater, tempered itself to every man's liking. And could any rational I will not say, could any the most fond appetite, any Epicure desire more?

And perhaps from this variety of tastes it was capable of, it admitted of as great a variety of dress and cookery; for 'twas ground in Mills, or beaten in Mortars, and being made into Cakes, it was baked or boiled, as they pleased to have it.

Besides all this, this bread was provided for them, as he says, without Tillage or any their Labour; it was but going out of their Tent-doors, and gathering of it up; where it fell so thick, that some of their own Authors tell us what was left, after the people had taken their Allowance, being melted with the heat of the Sun, ran down in large streams.

And

And yet for all this, see their *Ingratitude*, though they were thus treated in a desert place too, where nothing was to be had, they murmur till they cry again, as if they had been famished, *Numb. 11. 5, 6. We remember, say they, the Fish which we did eat in Egypt freely. Freely? (alas! God knows it was in slavery) the Cucumbers, and the Melons, and the Leeks, and the Onions, and the Garlick.*

They could remember the sorry pitiful Divertisements of their bondage in *Egypt*, but they forgot their Deliverance. *But now, say they, our Soul is dried away; there's nothing at all, besides this Manna, before our eyes: How dried away? it was their Lust and not the Manna did it then; for the taste of that, we are told in the 8th. verse, was as the taste of fresh Oil; and that could not sure dry them away. What? and nothing but Manna before them? Why? what could they wish for better? what could they desire more? for Manna was every thing, had the gust and relish of all sorts of viands, flesh, fish or fowl; nay, even of those Leeks and Onions too, if some of their own great Masters be not mistaken, which now they express so passionate a longing for.*

But here lay the business; they were tyed to this Heavenly food, and their appetite limited to *Manna*; and they seem to choose rather to live the life of *downright Slaves* again, then, upon the advantage of a *pretended Liberty*, to be confined to a diet, though of Angels.

Strange perversness! that we cannot know, when we are well used, and instead of being thankful, undervalue the Vouchsafements of divine Favour, for not being such as we would have them; as if the very reason of our quarrelling his Goodness were none other, but this, that it infinitely surpasses all our deservings.

As it was with the *Israelites*, so is it with most men in the world.

*Virgil.*

*Felices nimium, bona si sua norint;*

We are happy, too too happy, if we would but know it. The lust of our Hearts imbitters the *Manna* in our Mouths; my meaning is, that our evil Concupiscence and depraved Affections spoil God's blessings to us, and take off that Satisfaction we may and ought to take in them.

And that upon three grounds.

1. *Ex parte Dei*; Upon God's account.
2. *Ex parte Rei*; From the Nature of Things; and
3. *Ex parte nostra*; in Consideration of Our selves.

In regard of God, they meted it with an Omer, by his appointment; he stinted their Allowance, and ordered what would serve the turn.

As to the *Thing* it self; the *Manna* that was gather'd, were there more or less, there was neither too much nor too little; *he that gathered much, had nothing over, and he that gathered little, had no lack.*

And for *Themselves*, every one was satisfied with his Allowance; *they gathered every man according to his eating*, and would not have known what to have done with more.



1. God then, who is the great *Master* of the Family, the *Father* of the Universe, from whom *all fatherhood* both in Heaven and in Earth takes its Denomination, he sets the Measure, and puts the Bounds to every ones appetite; he knows what we really need, and provides for us accordingly. They were to be fed at a certain rate every day; an *Omer* a head was a fair and competent Proportion; and he gives Nature a Commission, that she might in a miraculous manner supply the Camp. Let them gather *Ephabs*, whole Bushels if they will, a man; when they come to measure, an *Omer*, the tenth part of an *Ephab*, one with another, must satisfy.

They have an Officer at *Rome*, whom they call the Commissary *de la bœte*, the Officer of the mouth; whose business is to take care that the Markets be supplied with Provisions according to the number of the People, whether Inhabitants or Strangers in the City. Nor does God's providence (which counts the very hairs of our head) take less care to number the Mouths of its eating Creatures, and furnish them all out of the Store-houses of its bounty. Matth. 10. 30.

*Thou openest thy hand and fillest every thing living with thy blessing*, Psal. 104. 28.  
 וְנָתַתָּ בְּטוֹב לֵבָבְךָ וּבְרַחֲמֶיךָ וּבְחַסְדֶּךָ וּבְחַנּוּנֶךָ וּבְחַיִּיבֶיךָ וּבְחַיִּיבֶיךָ  
 with thy good will and pleasure, I, and to their good liking and satisfaction too; for there is no *Pronoun* there to express, whether it be God's good will or the Creatures that he means. For so I told you it was in the *Munna*, that it answered every ones desire, and presented the Eater with any taste he best liked. That's the next.

2. The *Thing* it self was, as highly satisfactory in the *quality* of it, so sufficient in its *quantity*. There was all imaginable good things in it, all sorts of tastes; and there was great plenty of it that fell about their Tents, and 'twas but their pains to gather it. And as the *Food* might please the most nice and delicious *palate*, so the *Allowance* and *Proportion* would satisfy the greediest *stomach*. There was nothing over to those that had more, no lack to those who had less.

Thou who aboudest in Wealth, hast thy *Barns* and thy *Coffers* full, know that a small matter of this will serve thy turn, if thou wilt but gage thy natural Desires, and keep within the Compass of those necessities, which common life has laid upon thee; and be assured, that the rest, the *overplus* of thy gathering, will signify little or nothing at all to thee, but only to load thy *back* and thy *Conscience* here, and to burden thy *account* hereafter.

On the other hand, *Poor man*, whoever thou art, who art hardly sure of thy daily bread, but as Providence strangely caters for thee, hold thy self content; if thou trust in God, and go out a gathering, and use an honest Industry for thy subsistence, thy Allowance will find thee out, and the little that thou hast will be sufficient, be it more or less, there will be no *lack*.

Be thy food never so coarse, thy Piety will make it *Munna*; and what canst thou desire *better*? be it never so scant, God's goodness will make it an *Omer*, a belly full; and what wouldst thou have *more*?

3. For indeed, which is the *third* thing, it does not lye on God's part, nor is it in the *Things* themselves, that men are not satisfied with their Condition, more or less; but the fault is in the irregularity of our own Desires. *Ye lust and have not*, says S. *James*. Lust is an insatiable thing, James 4. 2.  
 and as he said of the Imperial Strumpet, will be sooner wearied then satisfied. Jerven.

Ecd. 1.8.

Numb. 11.6.

And this is not alway the *lust of the flesh*, but even the *lust of the eye* too, which makes men never contented. *The eye is not satisfied with seeing*; and alas! what good will our seeing do us, if that be all? We see, say the people, nothing but *Manna* before our eyes. It was every thing to their *tasts*; but because it was not so, nothing but plain *Manna*, to their *sights*, therefore they grumble. This sense is the greater *Episcure* of the two, and the belly is sooner filled then the eye. *Midas* to feed his eyes starves his body; every thing he touched turn'd into Gold, and whilst the *meat* as well as the *dish* that serves it in, becomes plate, he famishes in the midst of plenty.

What shall I say? what a little matter serves any of us, would we but confine our appetite within our *real*, and not extend it to our *fancied* wants? when all's done, if we have *according to our eating*, 'tis all we need; and what a little does that? and if we have what we need, what need we be discontented?

Herein *Rich* and *Poor* meet with equal advantage; and Providence, though it hath diversified Mankind in *outward conditions*, yet hath levelled us as to *inward satisfactions*; that the main man may be as happy, if he will, as to the *things* he enjoys, and as to *God*, from whom he receives them, if his mind be but rightly affected as it should, he may be as happy as the highest; He may have more of the sweet and pleasure of the *Manna*, as he has less of the care and trouble of *gathering* it. For after all, *Satisfaction* and *Contentment*, which never is but then, when thoughts and estates are adequate, this does not lie in the *bag* or *chest*, but in the *mind* of the owner. And indeed if we have *according to our eating*, what can we do with more? the rest is to be left. The *Manna* was rain'd down for present consumption. If ought was reserved till next day, it stank and bred worms. It was not given them to lay up or hoard in *Treasure*, not to traffick or merchandize with, but to supply their present necessity, and to be their daily Provision.

Yet some of them, whether out of *greediness* or *curiosity* or *distrust*, left of it till the Morning, so as to annoy themselves, and to offend *Moses* (for it *stunk*, and *Moses was wroth*, ver. 20.) And many times it so happens to those, who have gathered much, and leave behind them, that the Surplage serves only to purifie their Memory, when they are gone, and to breed Magots among their surviving Posterity.

Thanks to the bounty of Heaven, there is none of us but have a sufficiency of God's blessings, enough to make us happy; There's *Manna*, maintenance to be had; and God has given us strength and wit to gather it; or at least, if these Advantages are denied to any one, he will in some extraordinary way provide for all those that trust in him; for this *Manna* it self was Miracle.

What can we require *more*, then to have according to our eating? and what can we look for *less*, if as God is *provident* for us, so we be but *prudent* for our selves? What more do we every day beg of God then this, to *give us our daily bread*. In that one single *Petition* all our temporal Concerns are included, all the necessities of this Life provided for. If we have to supply these then, and God never fails in necessities; his handmaid Nature does not, *Natura non deficit in necessariis*; I say, if God allows us according to our eating, how *thankful* to God, how well *contented* in our selves ought we to be?

Having

Having food and raiment, says the Apostle, let us be therewith content. And well we may; for that is all we stand in need of, that is all we our selves can be concerned in. What is more, what is beyond the Omer, what's above our eating, what is to be left and reserved, is in the first place none of ours (for no more is ours then we enjoy) and in the second place it is perishable goods, and at a great hazard.

Thus have I done with the Deduction, the words of the Text afforded me, for the making out that *Every man has a sufficiency* of outward Blessings assign'd him by God's ordinary Providence, in that they meted it with an Omer, that was God's appointment; and that as to the Manna it self, more or less, *there was no lack*; and as to the Persons themselves, the Allotments were proportionable; they gathered every man according to his eating.

II. We should now proceed to speak of the *Inequality of God's Distribution* of his outward blessings, as we may perceive in the Difference of the collection, that some gathered much, and others little, and by the Proportion of their eating, that they gather'd every man according to his eating; where we cannot suppose that in a Family, as to the quantity, they eat all alike; but as some gathered more, some less, so some eat more and some less.

And then in the last place, as to the *Allegorical* sense of the Words, we should treat of the *Sufficiency of God's grace for the Support and Conduct of our spiritual Life*, of which this Manna was a mysterious Type.

But finding my self prevented in time for this undertaking, which will of it self take up a just Discourse; I must leave those heads to some other Opportunity, and shall now conclude with some brief Application from what has been already said, upon the *Historical* part.

And we may from hence gather these four Lessons.

1. *Contentedness* with that portion God has assign'd for us, with our Omer.
2. *Diligence in our place* and state of Life, to go out and gather what he has allotted.
3. *Trust in God's Providence*, that we rely upon him from day to day, as the Manna fell.
4. *Contempt of the World*, if we have but enough, not to trouble our selves with seeking more then will serve our present Mortality.

1. *First* then let us be Content with our assign'd Portion, be it what it will, more or less; 'tis Manna, very good, as it comes from God's hand; 'tis an Omer, very sufficient, as it comes to ours.

God's blessing and a contented Mind sanctifies every Condition, and teaches us with the Apostle, to know how to abound and how to want; nay, how to abound even in Want, whilst others, who are dissatisfied, want even in their Abundance.

Now this Contentation, as it settles our own Quiet within, so it will keep us from mourning against God, who has done so well for us, and from envying at others, for whom in the Judgment of the World he has done better.



To *repine* at our own Condition, is to question our heavenly Fathers *Wisdom* and his *Goodness*, as if he knew not what were best for us; or would not help us to it. And indeed, when we look up on his *Power*, if we will have it so, how can we help our selves, or make it to be otherwise?

Further, 'tis to loath *Manna*, to disparage his Gifts, and to provoke him to take them away from us, or at least to deprive us of the Comfort of them.

If it be with thee, as God has appointed for thee, thou art so well that thou *canst not*, thou *needest not* be better; but if thy own *Improvvidence* has brought thee into straits, thou hast none to blame but thy self; and thy Thankfulness to him for what he has done for thee, and thy Dependence upon him still for more, may and will prevail with him so far, as by his *Providence* to rid thee from the Inconveniences of that *Improvvidence* of thine own. For so *S. James* assures thee, *chap. 1. vers. 5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.* And where his *wisdom* is, there can be nothing wanting.

Only let that *Wisdom* of his in the first place teach thee to be *thankful*, and then he will supply all thy wants. The want of a thankful Heart, and a contented Mind, is surely the greatest want.

And where that *Gratitude* and *Contentedness* of mind is, there can be no *Envy* against our Neighbours, whom we see in a better Condition. He that is pleased with his own Condition, cannot be displeased with anothers.

Does thy richer Neighbour feed upon *Manna*? so dost thou; for such are all God's blessings, if rightly understood, if thankfully received. There lies the Quintessence, there the delicacy of all Injoyments, to injoy them in God, and God in them.

Is he blest with a greater Portion, has he greater plenty of it fall about his Tent? Well! he can have but his *Omer* for his own share; and so hast thou. His *Gathering* has been more than thine, but thy *Injoyment* is as great as his.

Has he more variety of worldly Blessings to entertain himself with? Thy scarcity does alike afford thee all manner of Variety; for if thou hast it with God's blessing, it is *Manna*, 'tis every thing in one.

Thy poor fare sanctified, will help thee to all the gusts of his better furnished Table, and perhaps nourish as well as delight thee to better Advantage. *Daniel's* pulse and water made his Countenance appear fairer, and his Flesh more plump and in better liking then those who eat the Portion of the King's meat. It is observ'd that *poor* mens children are more healthy, and look as well as the *rich*; and the *rich* themselves are convinced of this Truth, by sending their children abroad to be nursed by the poor.

Dan. 1. 15.

It is said, the taste of *Manna* was as the taste of fresh Oil. One *Rabbin* expounds it, as the taste of a *milch dug*. It is a Criticism, I confess, but 'tis passable and the words will bear it, without altering the *Hebrew* reading. What is that? As the child, says he, at the breast finds in the milk the taste of all that Variety of food, the Nurse takes in, curiously strain'd; so the *Manna* presented the Palate with all imaginable Delights.

Numb. 11. 8.

God himself is called אֱלֹהֵינוּ a God all-sufficient, say we, we may as well say, a God of dugs. Nor were the Heathens ignorant of this. At Athens there was the Statute of Minerva mammosa, full of dugs; an Embleme of Providence, the Daughter of the great Jehovah's brain.

Providence is all Dug, at which both rich and poor hang; and the poorest man, though he have not so large a Dug to apply to; yet he may draw as large streams of satisfying goodness from his little nipple, as the other does from his larger hold. For 'tis the Nipple only, that derives the Nourishment; 'tis the Breast that supplies it, and that is alike to all.

2. But then, *secondly*, this breast must be draw'd. There must be a diligent and industrious Application to those means, which Providence affords.

The Manna was to be gathered; and they were to go out and gather it; it was not to drop into their Mouths, nor to rain into their Tents. Nay, and they were to seek it early.

It is true, it fell so early in the morning, ere they were awake, in their sleep; whereupon they apply that Psalm 127. 2. *It is vain to rise up early, to set up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved sleep;* to shew, that man's industry without God's blessing makes it but the bread of sorrows, improves the Care, but lessens the Comfort of our worldly Enjoyments.

But they were to go out and gather it, after God had thus provided it, before the Sun grew too hot, for then it melted; and those who delay'd their gathering of it till the fourth hour, the Hebrew Doctors tell us, that is, ten a Clock with us, lost the food of that day, and went, as we say, out of God's blessing into the warm Sun.

God's gifts deserve our pains as well as our thanks: and though he made us and do constantly provide for us, yet he will not feed us and maintain us in this Life, no nor save us in the next, without our own labour and attendance.

3. And yet *thirdly*, this Labour and Care is not to be with anxiety. We are still to bottom our selves in a generous Trust and Relyance upon God, who as he provides aforehand that, which we are to labour for; so is also afterward to give success to those our Labours in the attainment.

Thus here in the Israelites case, there was a constant Provision and a constant Collection, a daily Allowance and a daily Labour. The Manna attended them, and they attended it, every morning.

This was the reason, they tell us, why God ordered they should lay up nothing of it till the morrow, that they might trust that goodness, which fed them to day for the morrow, and so forward.

The Manna, if not gathered, turn'd into Water; that oblig'd their diligence: and if it were kept till morning, it bred Worms; this engaged their trust, that the same God, who had all along, would still all along provide for them.

To distrust God is to disoblige his Goodness, as to murmur against him is to disparage his Wisdom.

4. In the *last* place, this trusting in God will take off our Dependences upon the Creature. The relying upon his *Providence*, and looking up to him, from whence our help cometh, will beget in us a *Contempt of the World*, and of all things here below.

*Alas!* how far are we concern'd in any thing here, but only for what an Ingenuous man would almost be ashamed to think of, for Back and Belly, *panem & pannum*, food and raiment; so the *Apostle* has told us before, that if we have them, there is all we really need; and our *Salvour* has bid us to *take no thought* for these, (that's *Heathen-like*, and below the Generosity of a Christian) and has assured us, that our Heavenly Father will provide for us, as he does for all his other Creatures, which are of less consideration than we are; and has directed us to a sure course of being provided for; *seek ye first*, says he, *the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and then all these things shall be added unto us.* That should be our first and main care.

The *Manna* may stay our stomachs, but must not satisfy us, so as to take up with outward Blessings. That was but a temporary Dispensation, to cease, when they came to *Canaan*, and so it did; for when they were come to *Gilgal* on the other side *Jordan*, and had tasted *proventum terræ*, the fruit of the promis'd Land, this Miracle was superleded; there was no more *Manna* to be found.

If God then does supply us in our Pilgrimage; if the *Manna* accompany us, as it did the *Israelites*, through the Wilderness of this World; if we are provided for with a competence for this Life, as there is no one but is, unless it be his own fault; and as the godly have a more peculiar Promise they shall, as having *the Promise of this Life and that which is to come*; Why? 'tis enough, and we may trust to God for it.

Let us direct our Thoughts and bend our Endeavours mainly to the Heavenly *Canaan*, be thankful for the *Manna* that falls by the way, but not content our selves only with these temporal Provisions, but *seek his Kingdom and the Righteousness thereof* with our principal Care; that we may be vouchsafed the *hidden Manna*, the Joys of Entertainments of the other world; which God of his Mercy as he has prepared for us, so by his Grace fit and prepare us all for them. *Amen.*



# Nadab and Abihu; or Schism Im- pleaded.

A Sermon Preached at Chelsey, Octob. 11.

1674.

Levit. X. 1, 2.

*And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his Censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not.*

*And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.*



OW that the time of *Four hundred and thirty* years were expired, wherein the Children of *Israel* had sojourned in the Land of *Egypt*; God, who does all things in the fulness of time, every thing in its just season, and is *never slack as concerning his Promise*, 2 Pet. 3. 9. remembers his ingaged kindness to his friend *Abraham* and his seed, resolves to visit his people in their afflicted state, and to redeem them from their sad Captivity; for the effecting of which miraculous Deliverance, he who mostly works by ordinary Means to bring extraordinary Events to pass, fits his servant *Moses*, a person chosen out for the manage of this great Design, as one whom he had purposely preserv'd, and by a suitable Education prepared for that Office, and sends him by a special Commission confirmed by many dreadful signs and *Wonders* to be the Leader and Conductor of his Hosts: who to gain him the greater Authority in his future Charge and Undertaking, is ordered first to signalize their departure with the death of the *Egyptians* first-born, and afterward with the destruction of their whole Army, when in a fond pursuit of those whom they had thrust out from amongst them, they attempted to follow them through the *Red-sea*; little mistrusting, that those Waves, which gave free passage to God's people, were to be the burial place of his Enemies.

After

After three Months march they arrive at Mount *Sinai* in the desert, a place it seems very convenient for the reception of so vast a Multitude, and for that and its solitude together, very fit for the Majesty of Heaven to treat with them, to own them as his Care, and to model them into a Commonwealth by such Rules, as might, if observed, prove effectual to their Security and his own Glory. For they were to be so select a Nation, as there was not the like in the World again; he did not deal so with any other People, nor had other Nations the knowledge of his Laws.

To this end, there is a *Mustel* of them taken, which by the Poll amounted to 600000 men, besides women and children, and a mixt company of Strangers that came along with them. A wonderful increase from so small a stock, as *seventy* and *five* Souls, as *S. Stephen* tells the number; as if *Egypt* had been no less a Nursery for their Improvement, then a Work-house for their Exercise; no less a Mother to multiply them, then a Step-mother to vex and oppress them.

So great a number could not be govern'd without *Laws*, to which they were to be inured in the Wilderness, that they might the better remember them, when they came to their Journeys end, the Land design'd for their Inheritance.

First then, the *Moral Law* was by an unusual way promulgated to them, which though it does naturally oblige all Mankind, yet had some peculiar Obligation upon the *Israelites*, both in the manner of its delivery, and in that one particular of the *Sabbath*, which was to be a sign betwixt God and that People. Again, for the ordering of Affairs among themselves in Civil matters, the *Judicial Law* was provided; and lastly, which was not the least, for the Concerns of Religion and the Worship of God, the *Levitical* or *Ceremonial Law* was given, of which this Book contains a full account; so that by the Judgment and Contrivance of God himself it appears, there are *three* sorts of *Laws* necessary for the Government of Society, *Moral*, *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical*. Upon these last we are now to speak.

In the *seven* first Chapters we find Orders set down for all kind of *Offerings*, all manner of *Sacrifices* in all whatever cases, what is to be done; for the *Burnt-offering*, *Meat-offering*, *Peace-offering*, *Sin-offering* and *Trespass-offering*, the whole Duty of the Priesthood as to that part.

In the *eighth* Chapter *Moses* consecrates *Aaron* and his four Sons to their Office; a Solemnity which lasted seven days. On the eighth day *Aaron* by *Moses's* direction offers for himself and for the People, which done, both he and *Moses* give them a Blessing; whereupon the *Glory of the Lord* appeared, that Glory to wit, which was the Sign and Pledge of his presence among them, that by which he used to manifest himself to them in the *Tabernacle*. And besides that, there came a *fire* out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the Altar the *Burnt-offering*; which, though extraordinary, was the usual token of his acceptance, as we shall shew in other Instances anon. This to the great Joy and Astonishment of the People; For *when all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces*; as we read in the close of the foregoing Chapter.

But it seems (for so it immediately follows in the beginning of this Chapter) upon the very self same day, *Aaron's* Sacrifices were not so well accepted, but two of his sons met with as ill success in their Ministration, through some default of their own. For *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the sons of *Aaron*, &c.

In

In which words we have *two* things mainly remarkable :

1. Their *Sin* ; in the *first* Verse.
2. Their *Punishment*, in the *second*.

The *sin* ; a Misdemeanour in God's publick Worship.

The *Punishment* ; a strange and signal Vengeance upon the Offenders.

We shall not insist so long upon the *History* as to take up all our time with it ; but from this sad example draw forth somewhat for our own *Instruction* ; and that by way of *question* ; Whether there be any such sin as this of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, now under the Gospel-state ; and What that sin most likely may be ?

The Resolution of which *question* will give us occasion, for the full stating of the business, to debate two or three *Queries*, such as these.

1. *Whether the Ceremonial Law having been abolished by Christ, Christians are obliged at all to Ceremonies in Worship ?*

2. *Supposing Ceremonies necessary ; whether any are to be used, but such only as are expressly prescribed by God himself in his Word ?*

3. *Granting that the Magistrate or Church may use their Authority in this case ; whether human Laws in matters of Worship do oblige the Conscience of Subjects or Members of that Church ?*

In the *last* place we shall shut up all with a serious *Admonition* to adhere to the established Worship ; there being nothing in it, as I do verily believe, and cannot find by any thing objected to the contrary, but what is agreeable to God's word, and the Practice and Purity of primitive times : since God in those things, which himself has not forbidden, requires our Obedience to Superiours, as our Governours under him.

I. First then of the *sin* it self. That in *general*, was some Indecency, some Irregularity in the publick and solemn Worship of God, which was highly provoking and affrontive to God himself, and scandalous to the People ; that by which God was greatly dishonoured, and the People offended ; as *Moses* declares in the following Verse. *This is it*, says he, *that the Lord spake, saying ; I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified*. It was, it seems, such a miscarriage, as argued want of Sanctity, of becoming Reverence and due preparation in the *Priests* themselves, and lessen'd God's Glory, and reflected much upon his Honour in the eyes of the people.

And by further Circumstances we may gather the heinousness of the Fault, besides the heaviness of the punishment ; That *Aaron* had nothing to say in the defence or excuse of his sons Actions ; And *Aaron*, upon *Moses's* rebuke, *held his peace* ; That their Carcasses were immediately ordered to be carried away from before the *Sanctuary* out of the Camp ; and That the Father and the two surviving Brothers were charged not to mourn or express any signs of sorrow for them, by *uncovering their heads or rending their cloaths* ; which were usual expressions of grief in other cases ; *Least you die*, says he, *and lest wrath come upon all the People* ; and to prevent this later, That *the whole house of Israel should bewail the burning, which the Lord had kindled* ; which implies, that if they did not all detest the fact, and beg pardon for it ; if they consented to it, or any way approved of it ; if they did not declare their utter dislike of it, they would be lookt on as accessaries, and partake

Verse 3.

Verse 4.

Verse 6.



take of the punishment, and the fire from the Lord would go on to further dreadful Execution upon the standers by.

As to the *particular*, wherein the Offence lay, one of the *Jewish* Doctors reckons up no less than *five* Miscarriages, which *Nadab* and *Abihu* were guilty of in this act.

1. One was, that this being a solemn day, wherein the *Altar* it self was to be consecrated as well as the *Priests*, the *High-priest* alone was to perform the whole Ceremony, as he did also upon the day of *Atonements*. Wherefore *Moses* speaks only to him, *Chap. 9. ver. 7. Go thou unto the Altar, and offer for thy self and for the people, and make an Atonement for thy self and for them*; and his Sons, we read *ver. 9.* only waited upon him, *to bring him the blood, &c.* so that they taking upon them to burn *Incense*, which was the highest and holiest point of Service, now at such a time, when their Father was to do all himself; and that without any order either from *Moses* or their Father, this was reckoned to them as a great sin.

And this intimated in the Text, says he, that *Nadab* and *Abihu* are called *the sons of Aaron*; in that being *Aarons's Sons* they did that which their Father himself should have done at that time, and not they; though at other times it had been lawful enough for any of the *Priests* to have done it, as being their ordinary Duty; but that this was an extraordinary occasion.

And thus it was a failure in *time*, in regard of the solemnity.

2. Another was, that they went *both* of them to burn *Incense*, whereas that was to be done but by one at a time, and not by two together. Thus 'tis said, *they took either of them his Censer.*

And so they failed in their double Diligence; when one would have served the turn; as *Moses* when he struck the Rock twice, and one stroke would have done.

3. A third Misdemeanour he grounds upon that phrase, that *they offered before the Lord*, that is, in God's immediate presence, within the Holy of Holies; which only the High-priest himself might do, and that but once a year neither.

And so their presumption was an error in respect of *place*.

4. A fourth mistake was, that whereas they should have fetched the fire for the *Incense* from off the *Altar* of Burnt-offerings, according to that Order we meet with *Lev. 16. 12.* that *the Priest shall take a Censer full of burning coals from off the Altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet Incense beaten small, and bring it within the vail, and then put the Incense upon the fire before the Lord, that he die not*; implying it a great transgression, to be punished with a strange and sudden death, if he did not observe this order: they contrariwise neglecting so to do, fetched fire somewhere from without, and brought it into the Sanctuary; whereupon 'tis called *אש זרה* *strange fire*, fire brought from some other place, and not taken off the *Altar*.

And so their fault lay in the *matter* of their Worship.

5. A fifth Misbehaviour might be, that *Moses* himself that day was to perform the Office of High-priest, so that *Aaron* was to do nothing but by *Moses* his order; and *Aaron* himself, as we may read in the foregoing Chapter, had no order to burn *Incense*; so that *Nadab* and *Abihu* sinned in doing that which their very Father might not do that day: *Moses* having given him no such Command, but reserved this office of burning *Incense*, as He tells us, for himself upon that solemn occasion.

And

And this, he says, implied in that they are said to do that which he commanded them not; that which neither *Aaron* their Father, nor they had any Command for.

And so it was a sin, in regard they had no lawful call to this office at this time, but went upon their own heads.

This account a learned *Rabbin* gives us, which I confess, if true, doth highly aggravate their offence; and this, as I observ'd, he gathers from the very words of the *Text*, in this way.

1. That being the sons of *Aaron*, they did that which their Father by his Office ought to have done, at such a solemn time as his own Consecration and the Dedication of the Altar were.

2. That they took either of them his Censer; whereas Incense was to be offer'd only by one at a time.

3. That they offered before the Lord, that is, in the Holy of Holies, where the ordinary Priests had no access, only the High-priest himself.

4. That they offered strange fire, that is, they did not take it off the Altar as they should have done, but fetched it from some other place to make use of.

5. That they did that which was not commanded to them, nor to their Father himself, who was only by *Moses's* order to offer the Sacrifice, and not to burn the Incense; *Moses* reserving that part of the Duty for himself.

Others of them limit the fault to some one or other only of these Circumstances, to wit, the Incense or the Fire.

As to the Incense, that they laid it only on the fire, and not as was customary on the Censer it self, as we find *Numb.* 16. 7. or that they brought Incense of their own, and did not make use of that which was hallowed for this purpose, whence it is said to be strange fire.

As to the Fire; one says, that they did not take it from that fire which came out upon the Altar from before the Lord and burnt up the offering; in the last verse of the former Chapter.

Another, that they did not, as the Order and Custom was, fetch it from the Altar, as (we shew'd before out of *Levit.* 16.) the Priest was obliged to do, but fetched it elsewhere from without; which at this time also argued a great want of Faith in them, when they had seen a little before, fire came down from Heaven upon the Altar, which Miracle they flighting, were therefore so openly punished.

And therefore a third from hence concludes, that their fault lay in bringing any fire at all at this time, when God was purposed to glorifie himself before the People by sending a miraculous Fire, and took it for a high affront and disparagement to his presence, to have common material fire brought and offered before him, this being a thing which he had not at this time commanded them, as we learn from *Chap.* 9. ver. 5. where it is said that *Aaron* and his sons brought that which *Moses* commanded before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and do not find by what went before, that he had commanded them to bring any fire at all, only their offerings.

I might without much impertinence in this place entertain you with a Discourse concerning that *sacred and miraculous Fire*, which came down upon the Altar, and consumed the Burnt-offering; of which *Scripture* gives us also some other illustrious *Instances*, besides this of *Moses* his Dedication of the Altar at first, as at *Solomon's* consecration of the Temple, 2 *Chron.* 7. 1. and in *Elia's* contest with the idolatrous Priests, 1 *Reg.* 18.

And this most Interpreters make to be the meaning of that place, *Gen.* 4. 4. that *God had respect to Abel and to his offering*; by which *Hebr.* 11. 4. 'tis said, *he obtain'd witness, that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts*; that is, he express'd his Approbation of his Sacrifice, by fire from Heaven, as the very Margin of our Bible intimates, referring us here to that very passage.

And the same account 2 *Macc.* 2. 8. *Jeremy* is brought in by way of Prophecy giving, of the *second Temple*, that *God would by the like appearance of his Glory shew his Acceptance and gracious Presence*, as he had done to *Moses* and *Solomon* at their dedications.

And then further I might treat of that *fire*, wherein *God* discovered himself in the Tabernacle, and shew some reasons why it pleas'd him thus to sanctifie and consecrate his Altar, and otherwise presentiate himself by *fire*; were it seasonable to our present business, or had I time from my other ingagement.

To make an end of this part, whether *Nadab* and *Abihu* were guilty of all those particulars the *Jewish* Authors charge them with, I shall not think my self obliged to believe; they having little other Probation than their own Conjecture.

It seems to me, that they being *Aaron's* sons, and so lawful Priests, might without any blame take either of them his Censer, and put fire therein, and put Incense thereon, by vertue of their Priestly function; and that their fault lay mainly in this, that they offered strange fire before the Lord, that is, fire which was not usual in this case, and indeed not lawful neither; such fire as was not commanded; being it should have been fire taken from the Altar of Oblations, as we heard before.

And this may be made good from the very Punishment it self, which *God* is wont to proportion to the Offence. Which is the second thing.

II. *And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.* Fire was their fault, and fire their punishment. That a strange fire, and This much more strange than that; for that was but common ordinary fire, this extraordinary and miraculous; that taken from some vulgar hearth, this fire from before the Lord, either out of Heaven, or out of that place, which then represented Heaven, the Tabernacle, where *God* had fixt his Residence; for so 'tis the *Jewish* opinion, that that fire which appeared upon the Tabernacle at the raising of it, retired into the Holy of Holies, and there sate upon the Propitiatory, and thence was wont to issue out from before the Lord.

The self-same fire then, which erstwhile in a miraculous manner consumed the High-priest's offerings, now with a more cruel Miracle devours his two sons, and makes the Priests themselves fall Sacrifices.

That



That *fire*, by which God was wont to witness his gracious *Acceptance*, now serves him to execute his *severest Vengeance*; and as their *sin* was to offer *strange fire* before the Lord, so their *strange punishment* must be to die by fire before the Lord.

God is incensed with their unlawful *Incense*, and their unhallowed flames make him break out into an holy Indignation, and shew himself a *consuming fire*.

O let us be careful how we make our addressees to a *jealous God*, or offer him those Services or Devotions, which neither He nor his Church hath commanded! and that is our next Inquiry.

*Whether* there be such a *sin* now in Gospel-times, as this of *Nadab* and *Abihu*; and *What* in all likelyhood it may be?

1. That there may be such a *sin* as theirs, will appear from almost a like instance of *Korah*, who was a *Levite* of a lower Order, and offered Incense too; and out of a rebellious Pride challenged the *Priesthood*, contrary to those Rules which God had given for the Government of his Church by *Moses*; which *sin* of his was attended with an exemplary *Punishment*; for he and his were swallowed up alive by the Earth, and the two hundred and fifty *Princes of the Assembly*, men of renown, which joyned with him, were consumed by such a *fire*, as here, which came out from the Lord; and Fourteen thousand seven hundred more on the morrow, which murmured at what was done, were slain by the Plague, as we read *Numb. 16*.

Now this passage, though it were in a case of the *Levitical Law*, *S. Jude* scruples not to apply to such *Christians*, as having separated themselves, despised Dominion and spoke evil of Dignities, that is, such as renounced the Authority and Communion of the Church, as governed by Apostles and their Substitutes; of these says he, *ver. 11. They perished in the gain-saying of Korah.*

It follows hence by way of *Analogy*, that this *sin* of *Aaron's* two sons, though at that time a trespass against the *Levitical Law*, people may even now, in the times of *Christianity*, be guilty of; since *these things hapned unto them for Ensamples, and are written for our Admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come*, as the Apostle expresses it, *1 Cor. 10. 11.* speaking there of those that were overthrown in the Wilderness, and that upon this Consideration, that *Christ*, as *Jews* themselves acknowledge, was that *Angel of the Lord*, who led them in their Journeys, and was Governour of their Church; whom therefore they are said there to have tempted, when they were destroy'd of the Serpents; and that in mystery they had the same Sacraments as we, having been all baptized unto *Moses* in the Cloud, and in the Sea; and having all eaten the same spiritual meat, and drunk the same spiritual drink out of the Rock which followed them, which Rock was *Christ*. Thus says he; which implies that the same sins they were guilty of, we may be so too, if we do not, as he warns us there to do, take heed by their Example.

2. Now *what* was these mens *sin*? the offering of *strange fire*, doing that in God's worship, which they had no order for, by the rule of their Ministrations.

In short then, the *sin* of a *Christian* answerable to this, is the presumptuous neglect of the appointed way of God's *publick Worship* in the Church we belong to.

For

For any *Minister* especially who is in orders, to act contrary to the order of his Ministry, to bring in Forms and Ways of Worship of his own in opposition or contempt of that *Church*, he has derived his ministerial Office from, is directly to do what *Nadab* and *Abihu* did here, to offer *strange fire*; and for *People* to accompany such, to abet and countenance them, is to run that hazard which the people were here in, to have the *wrath of God* come upon them; or perhaps to incur that displeasure and danger, as the Complices and Approvers of *Korah* in that sad Instance of his Contradiction and Disobedience did.

But some will say, this is only in matter of *Ceremony*, not of *Doctrine*. Why? such was *Nadab's*: the offering of Incense with *fire from the Altar*, or with *common fire*, was a thing of Ceremony; such was *Korah's*, whether it were a *Priest* or a *Levite*, that offered Incense, was a thing of Ceremony: but you must know, *Obedience*, which God prefers to  
 1 Sam. 15. 22. *Sacrifice*, is no matter of Ceremony; which brings us to our *Debates*;

I. The *Ceremonial Law* having been abolish'd by *Christ's Death*, whether *Christians* now are obliged to *Ceremonies* at all in Divine Worship; especially since the *Apostle* advises *Christians* to stand fast in that liberty wherewith *Christ* hath made them free?  
 Gal. 5. 1.

1. It is acknowledg'd, that that *Liberty* the *Apostle* there speaks of, is the *Christians* being made free from the yoke of the *Ceremonial Law*, and from the whole *Jewish Pedagogy*, according to the Determination of the *Apostles* met in Council, *Acts* 15. and that as those *Ceremonies* were *Types* of *Christ*, so far at least they were abolish'd by him, having had their full Completion and Consummation at his *Death* upon the *Cross*.

2. But then other parts of that *Ceremonial Worship*, which were not merely and altogether *typical*, may still be useful even for *Christian Imitation*, and safe in *Practise*; as several parts also of the *Judicial Law*, (notwithstanding the Obligation of that Law is wholly extinguish'd as to *Christians*, having been peculiarly appointed to the People of the *Jews*; yet) may not misbecome *Christian Policy* to own in many Instances, as in the case of *Theft*, *Adultery*, &c. and to give them a new stamp of Authority; that *Law* having been the *Model* of *Divine Wisdom* in the Government of his own People. I say, the same thing may be judg'd of several parts of the *Ceremonial Law*, as to the *Decency of Worship*, if there be no other inconvenience in the *Matter* or the *End* of their Institution, which may render the use of them dangerous.

Hence it was, that our *Saviour* himself, in the founding and moulding of his new Government, has thought fit to transcribe not a few particulars out of the old Frame and Structure into his *Religion*; As for Example, he chose *twelve Apostles* to be Governours of his Church, as they had *twelve Phylarchæ*, or Heads of the Tribes; and *seventy Disciples* of a lower Rank to assist in Instruction and Government, as *Moses* chose  
 Numb. 1. 44. *seventy Elders* for his Assistance; and he appointed *two Sacraments* alike as they had two, *Baptism* for *Circumcision*, and the *holy Supper* in place of the *Passover*; and *Baptism* it self so to be administred by washing with water, as it had been used by the *Jews* themselves, at the admission of their *Proselytes of Righteousness*.  
 Numb. 11. 15.

And

And upon this account, I suppose, the Author to the *Hebrews* has with a great deal of pains learnedly resolv'd most of the *Jewish Rites* into *Allegories* and *Mysteries of Christian Profession*; so that we, in his pious sense, have a *Priesthood*, an *Altar*, a *Sacrifice*, a *Sabbath*, &c. as they had.

And for this reason likewise, I imagine, it was, that the *Primitive Christians* did, for about two Centuries, in Compliance with the *Jews*, observe their *Sabbath* as well as the *Lord's day*.

3. It must be granted on all hands, that God cannot be otherwise serv'd or worshipped, but with *Ceremonies*; such as are the *Time* when, the *Place* where, the *Persons* by whom, and the *Form* or *Manner* how, and other the like *Circumstantials* of Religion.

And thus the *Sabbath* it self, whether *Jewish* or *Christian*, the *seventh* or the *first Day* of the *Week*, which doubtless is one of the greatest Instruments and Supports of Religion, is yet in it self considered, both as to the *Day* and as to the *Manner* of observing it, in the main a matter of *Ceremony*; for had it been of *Moral* obligation, it could never have been alter'd, but would have preserv'd that Obligation in a perpetual and an universal force.

4. It must as readily be granted, that there was by *Christ* provided and left a *Liberty* to the *Church Universal*, and to *National Churches* also within their own *Districts*, to settle the *Methods* and *Affairs* of *Church-Polity* and *publick Worship*, so as may be most expedient *pro hinc & nunc*, according to present Occasions.

Such a *Liberty* in all probability has been left by *Christ* to his *Church*; because we do not find in *Scripture*, that *Christ* has directly interpos'd his own Authority in several matters of *Government* and *Worship*, which sure he would have done, had he thought fit to have laid any restraint upon the *Churches Power* in such cases.

This *Liberty* though is not to be extended so far, as that any *private Persons* or *Parties* within a *Church* may challenge a *Freedom* and *Exemption* from the *Rules* and *Orders* of that *Church* they belong to, and to set up for themselves in distinct ways of *Worship*; for this would not be so much *Liberty* as *Libertinism*.

II. Whether any *Ceremony* be necessary or safe in *God's Worship*, but what's expressly prescribed in *God's word*? For to say otherwise, would seem to derogate from that *Perfection* and *Sufficiency*, which is peculiar to *Scripture*, to which therefore we are commanded neither to *add* nor to *diminish* from it. Accordingly *Christ* himself reproves those, who teach for *Doctrines the Commandments of men*, and affirms their *worship* to be *vain*. And here very *Nadab* and *Abihu* are found fault with, censur'd and punished, for doing that in *God's Worship*, which *God commandeth them not*.

Deut. 12.32.  
Rev. 22.18, 19  
Matth. 15.9.

1. I answer, that *God's word* or *holy Scripture* is a perfect Rule of *Faith* and *Manners*; and herein lies its *Perfection* and *Sufficiency*, that it hath delivered to us all things necessary for *Belief* or *Practice* in order to *Salvation*. But this does not imply, that we are to look for the Constitutions of *Forms of Worship* and other *Externals of Religion* in *Scripture*.

For



Eph. 2. 14. For though the *Israelites*, as God's peculiar People, had a *Form* of *Worship* prescribed to them by God, whereby they were distinguished from all other *Nations* and *Religions* in the world; yet now that since that *partition-Wall* is broken down, the case is much alter'd, and a greater Latitude, as was fit, allow'd to the *Church* in her *publick Ministrations*; because what may be convenient to one Society of *Christians*, in some one Age, may not prove so to another Countrey, or at some other time.

Jude 12. James 5. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 29. For which reason it was, that some ancient Usages even of the *Primitive Church* were, for some abuses or other Inconveniencies, early laid aside by succeeding Christians, as the *Love-Feasts* mention'd by S. *Jude*, the *Extream Unction* order'd by S. *James*, and the *Baptizing for the Dead*, from which S. *Paul* draws an Argument for the Resurrection.

1 Cor. 14. 40. And on the other hand it is no less probable, that the *Church*, any *Church*, hath the like Freedom to take up other *Rites*, and make new *Institutions*, according to the present Expedience or Exigence of Affairs, agreeably to general Rules set down in Scripture, that *all things be done decently and according to order*.

2. And this is the more rational for us to conclude, in that we do not find in the whole Gospel any certain set *Plat-form* of *Worship* and *Church-Order*, appointed by *Christ* himself, or by his *Apostles*, whom he intrusted with the care of planting and governing *Churches*; who yet certainly gave Orders in all things necessary.

Mat. 28. 19, 20. Thus our *Saviour* taking his leave of the *Apostles*, after he had given them Commission to go into all the World and to preach the Gospel, he bids them to teach them, that is, their Converts, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; and that by those things he intended not only the *Doctrines* of the Gospel, which are plainly set forth in the Books of the *New Testament*, and concern all *Christians* in general, but also some private *Instructions* for their ordering of *Worship* and *Government*, wherein the *Apostles* and their Successors were to be more particularly concerned, is so far from being unlikely, that scarce any thing can be more probable; especially, since he's pleased to confirm and ratifie that their Commission with a Promise, that he would be with them to the end of the World; which doth in a more peculiar manner refer to their *Government*, the Peace and Welfare and good Order of the *Church*.

1 Cor. 11. 34. And much to the same sense his *Apostle Paul*, who advises in general, that *all things be done decently and in order*, tells his *Corinthians* upon some particular Instances, that *the rest*, when he comes, he would set in order; but what things those were, he was thus to set in order, or in what order he put them, we are to seek as well in Church-History, as in his own Writings.

It is sufficient then to those, that are meekly pious, that our *Superiours*, who are to order such things, wherein *Christ* and his *Apostles* have given no order, do according to occasion make use of their *Prudence* and *Authority* to provide in such Cases, which are not otherwise provided for, by making *Deductions* from general Rules of Scripture; and those who are (as I said) meekly pious, will not scruple to comply with such *Prudence* and *Authority*.

3. Whereas it is objected, that we are not to add or diminish from what God commands, it is fairly evident from the Places themselves, where that Expression is used, to wit, *Deuteronomy* and the *Revelations*; that it is to be understood only, in the One of those Laws which *Moses* by God's

God's appointment deliver'd to the People of *Israel*; and, in the *Other*, of the *Words of the Book of that Prophecy*, as it is there limited.

And whatever there may be said of the *Doctrinal* part of *Religion* from those Places; it is clear, that that Prohibition does not extend it self to the *Ceremonies of Worship*, even under the Oeconomy of the *Jews*, who were tied up to theirs.

I say, it is apparent from the Examples of King *David*, *Solomon*, *Ezekiah*, *Josiah*, who in their Reforms of the Church did add several *Methods* and *Institutes* of their own, which God had no where prescribed by *Moses*, and yet are not, as we can find, any where discommended for their so doing.

Add to this, that by the publick Authority of the *Jewish Church*, the Fast and the Feast of *Purim* was appointed to be kept without any Pre-Esth. 9. 26, 27. tence, as we read, of an immediate *Divine Institution*; and that the *Dedication of the Temple*, which is a Festival not so much as mention'd in the *Canon of the Old Testament*, was celebrated down along to our *Savi-*John 10. 22. our's time, and was honoured with his presence.

Nor is this, or the like, *teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of men*; since in those things, which our lawful *Superiours* Command, that do not thwart and contradict the Divine Will, it is the will of God that *Inferiours* should obey.

4. If that were a sound *Maxim*, that nothing is to be done, or admitted of, especially in God's publick *Worship*, but what there may be found in *Scripture*, the Word of God, a *direct and expresse Command* for; from hence by necessary Consequence would follow all manner of Confusion, and every thing almost in *Religion* would be render'd questionable.

I am not about to reflect on *Parties*. I know there may be, I believe there are, well meaning Persons in all, in most, of our *Divisions*. Let me name them, as they are content to have themselves nam'd in publick Writings, without offence.

Upon this ground and rule it has been, that *Liturgy* and *Episcopacy*, two things of the most venerable Antiquity in the Church, have been thrown off by *Presbyterians*; that holy *Orders* and *human Learning*, without which we cannot suppose a regular and well qualified *Clergy*, have been undervalued by *Independents*; that the *Baptism of Children* has been quarrell'd by *Anabaptists*; and that the *Lord's day* has been disputed by *Sabbatarians*; because, as they say, there's no such thing, as any of these, in *Scripture* expressly commanded.

And yet see, how the Consequence redounds upon themselves. Where lies the difference? They will not comply with our *Forms of Worship*, nor submit to our *Methods of Government*, by reason, as they pretend, there's no *Scripture* can be produced, wherein they are expressly commanded. Can they themselves produce any such expresse *Scripture*, for their own *Forms* and *Methods*? If not, 'tis highly absurd for any one to object that to another, of which himself is no less guilty: nay, much more, when it is done with this Disadvantage of inequality, that the *Inferior*, who owes a Deference to *Authority* in things doubtful and uncertain, seems to obtrude upon the *Superior*, that which he would not have the Superior to impose upon him.

The *Case* stands thus, in things of this nature, which are neither *expressly* nor *directly* commanded or forbidden by God himself; that it is enough to oblige and justify any ones obedience, that they are commanded by lawful Authority; to which God himself, in all things not sinful, that is not forbidden by himself, hath order'd our submission. And thus

flood the case here with *Nadab* and *Abihu*, as some *Interpreters* expound it, that they offered *strange fire*, which he, that is, *Moses*, commanded them not.

5. To drive this home, *Religion* it self, in those things, which the strictest take to be the main Parts, and all Christians look upon as the great Supports and Instruments of Piety, would be infirm, and not able to maintain it self.

Not only the *Sabbath*, which I have named before, but the saving Ordinance of *Preaching*, the great Blessing of *Vulgar Scripture*, nay, the *Books of Canonical Scripture* it self would come into question, as being no where set down *totidem verbis* in Scripture.

Hence the *Karai*, or *Scripturists*, a kind of *Puritans* amongst the *Jews*, rejected all the Books of the *Old Testament*, but those *Five*, which *Moses* wrote. Nor indeed was that *Canon* compleated, as some tell us, till *Ezra* the Scribe did it; and some *Books* there, as well as in the *New*, were for some time under dispute.

But we have a *Sett*, who, as if they were immediately taught of God, seem to lay aside all *Scripture*, and pretend to speak by the same Spirit, as the *Prophets* and the *Apostles* did; and therefore (which is the *Papist* doctrine too) that those Writings were only design'd for temporary Occasions.

What shall I say? The sum of all is, that those great things I have been instancing in, we owe much to the *Judgment* and *Custom*, to the *Authority* and *Practise* of the *Church*; whereupon it follows, that she ought in all reason to be allowed the like Authority, at least in things of lesser alloy; for which reason she is call'd the *Pillar of Truth*. Not that I pretend such an *Infallibility* in the Church, as the *Romanists* challenge, that must be suppos'd mainly to lie in *Doctrinal* determinations; but as to things *Indifferent*, which relate to the outward *Worship* of God, I do hold, that rational *Deductions* and prudent *Consequences*, recommended by the *Churches* Authority, are sufficient to satisfy all peaceable Consciences. For if every one that is subject, should think himself at liberty to own or disown such *Deductions* and *Consequences*, the same Absurdity would still be kept on foot, by leaving every thing to *private Interpretations*.

1 Tim. 3. 15.

III. Supposing it necessary, as we have been proving it to be, for the Church to interpose her Authority in *Ceremonies of Worship*; whether *Ecclesiastical*, that is, *human Laws*, oblige Conscience, especially in things confessedly *indifferent*? since what God has left free, men should leave to too; it being not in the power of man to alter the Propriety of things, so as to make that, which is in it self *indifferent*, to become either *virtuous* or *sinful*.

1 John 3. 20.

1. I do easily yield, that God is only *Lord of Conscience*, and therefore that *human Laws*, be they *Civil* or *Ecclesiastical*, do not of themselves and immediately oblige Conscience, but by Virtue of the *divine Precept*, which has bound us to obey all lawful Powers over us.

Rom. 13. 5.

Upon this account the *Apostle* has stated the case, that *we must be subject, not only for wrath, but for Conscience sake*; which Conscience obliges a man, as in things *lawful*, to pay an *active* obedience; so even in things *sinful*, which are unjustly commanded by a just Authority to obey *passively*, that is, without resistance to submit to penalties.

2. To deny the obligation of *human Laws* in things *indifferent*, is in effect to destroy all Government; for it is no less then to cancel and make useless the Authority of the *Magistrate*, whose Dominion mainly lies in things



things of that nature ; since things that are simply and absolutely good, are already commanded by God himself, as also things that are in themselves evil, are by him forbidden : so that the Power of *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction* is in a manner wholly taken up in things of a *middle* nature, which are of themselves simply neither good nor evil, but as they are commanded.

And this is further evident by bringing the case home to particular *Families* ; where, if we should not allow such a Power in these things to *Parents* and *Masters* ; that Subjection, which by the Laws of *Nature* and *Policy*, is due to them from their *Children* and *Servants*, would by necessary Consequence be voided and disannull'd.

Now why the Fathers of the *Country* and the *Church* should be abridg'd in the Exercise of that Power, which *Nature* and *Policy* have lodg'd in the Governours of *Families*, I see no reason ; unless one would think it fit, that the Affairs of *Church* and *State* should be left at a greater Uncertainty, then those of private *Families* ought to be, which is as great an absurdity as can be ; every private *Family* being but an Abstract and Representation of the *Commonwealth*, to which it doth as a Member appertain.

3. Though things *indifferent* be in their own Nature free, so that they may be done or not done without sin, whilst they are left such ; yet when they are once by the Command of a lawful *Superior* determin'd and bound up, the *Inferiors* obedience is so far from being free, that it becomes necessary : For in all things lawful we *may* and *must* obey the Powers that are over us ; but all things not sinful are lawful ; and those things which are not expressly forbidden by God himself, are not sinful, and such are things *indifferent* : Therefore in all such things when commanded, Obedience is Necessary.

It is true, where God commands or forbids one thing, and a *Superior*, how lawful soever, enjoins or prohibits another, where I say the *Divine* and the *Human Laws* do thwart and contradict one another, there we are to obey God rather than men, as the Apostles stated it ; but in these things of *Indifference*, there's no Contradiction, no Competition of human Laws with God's Will and his Word ; so that in these cases we may fairly obey them both ; nay, by obeying men we do obey God also, who hath set them over us. A85. 5. 29.

The upshot is : When a *Law* is once made by a just Authority concerning these things, every Member of the Society is bound to obey ; nor can *Indulgence* it self be suppos'd to quit the *Obligation* of that *Law*, but only may dispence with the *Execution* of it, so as to remove the *Penalty*, not so as to take away the *Guilt* of the persons offending.

4. Lastly ; That things, which God has left free *must*, or indeed can be so left by men, I clearly deny ; because without any previous command, those things, which are in their nature *indifferent*, are in particular acts of men conversant about them, necessarily determin'd *Good* or *Evil*, and by Consequence become *vertuous* or *sinful* accordingly as they are well or ill made use of ; so that every man's *private Judgment* and Choice, no less then *publick Authority*, alters the Nature of things from what God is pretended to have made them. Therefore that is an *Argument* of no force at all.

The result of all is ; To worship God in a *Form* or *Way* not expressly commanded by himself, or contrary to the Form appointed by the *Church* we relate to, if that Form so appointed be not simply sinful, is sin, at the least the sin of *Nadab* and *Abihu* here to offer strange fire before the Lord in his publick worship.

Let me *conclude* in a word, as I promised, seriously to admonish you, to take heed of *strange fire*, for fear of *that fire which comes out from the Lord*.

I know some people are tempted with *Curiosity*, others possess with *Admiration of persons*, others led on by *Example*, and some won over to Parties with a *seeming Integrity*, and others taken with a pretended *Purity of Gospel-worship*, to withdraw from our *Assemblies*, to go aside into by-ways of *Separation*, and think they do God good service in so doing.

But let me tell you, this was *Nadab's* sin, if it be not more; for if there be an ill meaning to the *Church* in this separation from her *Assemblies*, her *Offices*, her *Institutions*, it is of more dangerous Consequence, then you are aware of; it is the sin of *Korab*. At best it is *offering strange fire before the Lord*, which he is so far from accepting and being pleased with, that he looks upon it as Affront to his *Worship*, and contempt of his *Church*. *S. Jude* calls it *fire*.

Jude 23.

Let us *sanctify* the Lord, and *glorify* him before the People, in our due attendance upon his *Courts* and *Ordinances* in the *beauty of Holiness*, in a regular way, according to publick Appointment.

Let us, since some *Ceremonies* or other are necessary in his *Service*; and since he has not in his *Word* laid down a certain *platform* of them, but lest *Orders* and *Authority* with his *Church* to prescribe in these cases; and since the *Authority* of our *Superiors* is such, that in things not simply *sinful*, in things not *forbidden* by God himself, we are bound to obey; and since there is nothing enjoined us by our *Church*, which we can say is in it self *sinful*, or in God's word *forbidden*; Let us, I say, keep close to the *established way of Worship*: let us take our *fire* from off the *Altar*, and so bring our offerings before the Lord, that we may find his acceptance, and he may shine upon us in the perfection of Beauty.

Let us not pretend to serve him by provoking him with *strange fire*.

Let us possess our *Hearts*, and inflame our *Devotions* with his *sacred fire*, which may *inlighten* our Minds and *warm* our Affections; that he may touch both the *Priests lips* and the *Peoples hearts* with *coals from his Altar*, that the *cloud of the Incense* of our Prayers may cover the *Mercy-seat*, that we die not.

Let us not slight the *Church*, and disparage *God's honour* by fetching *fire* from without, and by ingaging our selves into Schism, provoke God to send a *fire* among us to consume us and our Posterities after us.

Let us solemnly worship before him in *Decency* and according to *Order*.

Let us frequent his *House*, delight in his *publick Service*, observe his *Statutes* and his *Ceremonies*, and attend his *Sacraments* with that religious *Reverence* and devout *Humility*, as the *Church* has appointed us; that we may procure his Favour to our *Sion*, and find acceptance of our holy *Duties*, and comfort and blessed Assurance to our *Souls*, in all our drawings near to him: which God of his Mercy grant through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen*.

## Of Indifference in Religion.

A Sermon Preached at *Whitehall* before the King,  
in July 1670.

Acts XVIII. 17.

—And Gallio cared for none of those things.



WHEN we seriously consider the present state of *Christianity* in this our Age, to what *indifference* all the concerns of *Religion* are grown among the generality of ordinary Professors; it must be our wonder at once and grief, that men, who devoted themselves to *Christ* and his *Church* by holy Baptism, and own still the name of *Christians*, should yet be so regardless, either of the honour of *Christ* our blessed Lord, or the interests of his *Church* our Mother; as by a kind of universal defection and conspiracy to throw up all those sacred obligations our Religion has laid upon us, and quitting those great advantages God's providence hath afforded us, in the plentiful use of the means of grace, to abandon our selves to common principles of corrupt reason, by which very *Pagans* and *Infidels* through all Ages have, even to our reproach, managed themselves in their erroneous worship and moral practice.

I say, we have been so far from maintaining those obligations and improving those advantages, by which the favour of Heaven designed to distinguish us from the *heathen* world, that we have for the most part of us run down our selves into downright heathenism, and (through our wretched carelessness and Gallio-like temper) rendred our condition, as we have just reason to fear, far worse than theirs.

I shall not now draw a parallel betwixt the lives of *Christians* and *Heathens*, to shew that we do generally as much exceed them in vice as we do in privilege; and that they as far outgo us in practice, as they come short of us in knowledge; nor make it my complaint, that our Religion is broken and split into as many *Seets* and *Schisms*, as ever their Philosophy was: but shall rather endeavour to shew the rise and ground of this general apostacy, which I take to proceed from this, that *Christians*, as Christians are nowadays, have, for the most part, no other sentiments of Religion, no other principles of life, than what stark *heathens* had: nor has the Word and Ordinances of God any considerable influence or effect upon us. I mean, we are no further concerned in

\* \* T t

these



these things, then as meerly we are directed and set on work by the force of a *natural conscience*; which as it is more *vigorous* or *remiss*, acts people accordingly.

And it were well for us, if the impulses of *that* were heedfully regarded, if its directions and conduct were constantly followed; well, if *that* were kept in good order, and duly wound up to its duty. But alas! *that* in most men is suffered to flag too, that the soul hangs the wing, and the ruling part in us is so slackened and unbent, that we are born down by sensual appetite and carnal affections, and for matters of *Religion* (for such mainly were *these things* here) we have, with Gallio, no relish, no consideration, no care at all. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

We shall not spend time in giving the *historical* account of Gallio, as having designed to handle him rather practically, by discovering the causes and ill effects of Gallionism; and for his *personal* character and the circumstances of the story, to take in by the way what may be suitable to any of those heads. Only before we set out, I must remove an objection or two out of our way.

S. Paul was drag'd by the Jews at *Corinth* to the judgment seat; *Stothenes*, S. Paul's friend, was beaten by the Greeks in open Court: the quarrel was about Religion. Gallio, great *Seneca's* brother, (for so it appears by an Epistle of that Author to his Mother) being then *Proconsul*, Lord Deputy of the Country, leaves them to themselves, and declares he will have nothing to do in the business.

This some will say perhaps, was a piece of *moderation* in him, a quality that well becomes any Governour, and will much more become any private man, in his dealing with men of different persuasions.

I, but 'tis taken notice of here by all *Interpreters*, as a fault, a Remark clapt upon him by the Spirit of God, that he was a careless Magistrate, a careless Man, *he cared not for those things*. Now it concerns any person, whether *publick* or *private*, to take care of the concerns of Religion. For though he pretends, it being about a business of Religion, he had no such instructions from his Masters at *Rome*, his Commission would not reach that case: these were matters did not belong to his cognisance, he was a Civil Magistrate; and if it had been a thing of that nature, a *secular quarrel*, he would have said somewhat to it. We must however lay it down as a Maxim, that *Magistrates*, as they are God's Vicegerents, are to look to the Rules of his *worship*, as well as to *civil* affairs: they are by their office Guardians of both Tables. And therefore the Church in her *Litany* teaches us to pray, that God would bless and keep the Magistrates, giving them grace to execute justice, and to maintain truth. Justice in the State, and truth in the Church.

Again, they brought in here a *secular* charge; they charge him with breach of Laws, that he brought in a worship contrary to the Law. And Religion it self is not excusable, if it be found transgressing Laws and trespassing upon publick order. That's a trick of the *Papal* monarchy, to exempt their Priests from the secular Judicatures; and there are other Religions that think themselves distant enough from *Popery*, would do so too, if they might. But this is not consistent with the letter of the Text, *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers*; whose authority (we acknowledge) reaches to all causes and over all persons.

Further, for his own sake at least, he should have had that care of his own soul, that regard to Religion, as to have given the cause a hearing. What a providential opportunity did our *Gallio* here by his carelessness loose? an opportunity which very likely he was never offer'd again; of being made acquainted with the mysteries of the Christian faith, having at this time the great Doctor of the Gentiles before him ready to give him instruction. We read, *Sergius Paulus* was converted upon such an occasion, from whose conversion some believe our Apostle took his name, as Conquerors were wont to wear the style of the Countries they subdued. Who knows, how the eloquence of *Paul*, had he been permitted to make his defence, might have wrought upon *Gallio's* good nature? How happy might it have been for *Gallio* to have been *S. Paul's* Convert and Profelyte, as his brother the learned *Seneca* is supposed to have been? For though some Monk hath abused us happily with a forgery in those Letters extant, yet it is *Lipsius* his judgment, that there were Letters past betwixt him and *S. Paul*, who is therefore by many taken to be one of those of *Cæsars* household made mention of *Phil.* 4. 22. This was not *moderation* then but *remissness* in *Gallio*, which procured at once an affront to his authority by a riot in the Court, and for ought we know, an eternal prejudice to his own soul, by letting slip such an overture of grace.

But then, which is worse then this, *Jesuits* and *Seſtaries* may plead that theirs is the same case with *S. Paul's*, when they are brought before the Magistrate, that 'tis only *in causâ religionis*, and for their conscience that they are brought into trouble, for preaching and acting contrary to the laws of men. But with their leave, *S. Paul* and they differ infinitely, both as to their *commission*, and as to their *principle*. *S. Paul* was sent by a heavenly call to preach the Gospel every where; let them by miracles and extraordinary gifts shew such a *call* they have to wander up and down.

Again, for their *principles*, they are such as are destructive to government; whereas there is no one thing, which in all *Paul's* Epistles is so earnestly recommended, and so frequently inculcated, as obedience to civil Authority. What the *Jesuits* doctrine and practice hath been is too notorious. How the *Consistorians* in these retrench Kingly power, is evident from their own Books: and as to matter of *fact*, what the *Seſtaries* practices have been, we need not go far to instance; we have had woful experience at home. God forbid we should ever be so remiss and negligent, as to give them such another opportunity! though truly to such a head are some people grown, and such is the *indifference* and carelessness of some inferiour Magistrates that should look after it, that it is hard enough for any one to foresee the event.

Nor will the Speaker himself very likely pass without censure for making choice of such a subject. But the sense of my duty will bear me up, and that by many obligations and several *oaths*. Besides, it must be considered, that the *general* concerns of *Religion* are at this time especially of greater and more absolute necessity to be spoken to then any *particular* doctrine of the *Church*.

Having thus as briefly as I might answer'd these Objections, we proceed to our main Discourse, wherein we are

1. To discover the *grounds* and *causes* of this remiss careless humour, whether in Magistrates or private Persons, what 'tis that makes men generally of so *indifferent* a temper in the concerns of Religion.

Then to shew the *mischiefs* and ill consequences of such a reckless principle.

First then the *causes* and *grounds* of *Gallionism*, what 'tis makes most people so regardless in the concerns of Religion; we take to be these;

1. *Popularity.*
2. *Cowardise.*
3. *Self-interest.*
4. *Love of ease.*
5. And downright *Prophaneness.*

And all these by most people vail'd under the specious name of *Moderation*.

Statius.

I. For *Popularity*. This might possibly be *Gallio's* case. A frank good-natur'd Gentleman, (so the Poet styles him, *dulcem Gallionem*.) lately sent over by *Claudius* from *Rome* to be Governour of the Country; he was not out of policy to disoblige any party upon his arrival. The *Jews*, several Families of them, had planted themselves here at *Corinth*, and had free exercise of their Religion allowed them. We read of two *Synagogues* in this very Chapter. The *Christians* by *Paul's* two years ministry here were considerably increased in their numbers. Let them agree their differences, since they will fall out, how they will for *Gallio*: Let the *Jews* hale *Paul*, let the *Greeks* beat *Sosthenes*; why should he be obliged to declare for either side? when which side soever he took, to be sure he was to loose the other. The best way to please all, is to let them alone to themselves. This the only course to preserve the interest of his Government betwixt them both, to take no notice at all of their quarrels, that so neither *Jew* nor *Christian* might complain of him for favouring one side or t'other.

And are there not *Gallio's* enough in all Christian States, that set it down as a politick Rule, that the concerns of *Government* are best kept up by the counterpois of contrary factions, and by an unconcerned regard of the *Governour* to all persuasions; that the Magistrates *indifference* as to different professions of Religion is the best method of security he can use; only with this care, to keep the *balance* as even as he can? And that to shew kindness to any one, though the *Orthodox*, is dangerous for the begetting the *odium* of the rest. *Divide & impera*. Are there not those that do positively affirm, (what *Gallio* here did but intimate) that the *civil power* hath nothing to do, to judge of such matters, things that pertain to the worship of God?

But ah! precarious *authority*, if it think 'tis bound to let every man do what seemeth good in his own eyes, and cannot govern but by seeking to please. Ah! sorry wicked irreligious *policy* that makes Religion to be none of the Magistrates care. Ah! *treasonous* doctrine that discharges thus God's Vicegerent of the best part of his trust, the worship of God, and lays him aside from serving his great Master whom in all his royal dignities he represents, in that which is his Master's great and dearest concern, *Religion*. This is not that *wisdom* surely by which *Kings* reign, and *Princes* decree justice.

Prov. 8. 15.

Nor



Nor are there wanting those *Ministers* that out of this popular humour study to preach *placencia*, those doctrines and in those methods, which may most please the people; and are nice and cautious in offering those truths which may grate their ears or offend tender Consciences; that so they may come off with a general applause, and gain the good will of the people. These, these are the winning men: these have been the *demagogues*, that have been followed by whole throngs of Auditors, and pointed at as they pass along, like *Demosthenes* by the Herb-wife, for the precious and the choice men. But alas! is not this to *huckster* 2 Cor. 4.2. the word of God, to attempt it to the peoples liking, that it may go off? Is not this to palliate and to *dawb with unhalloved mortar*? what Ezek. 13.10. is this but to *sew pillows* under peoples arms, to keep from them severer, though more necessary, truths, and glare them with new taking notions, to pave their way to Hell with pleasing methods, to sooth them up in *faction* and *schism* and in spiritual pride, to comply with them to their hurt; and as *Aaron* did to make them a Calf, because they will have it so, to go before them. Ezek. 13.18.

Alas! what *Religion*, what *Government* are we like to have either in *Church* or *State*, if it must be modell'd to the peoples mind; the world being grown to that pass, that if every body may not do what they list, especially in the service of God, *Magistrate* and *Minister*, and all that go about to limit them, and bring them to any order, shall have their *hated*?

Nor is it any wonder if, when those in publick place are so complaisant to the people, this *remissness* in private persons be lookt on as a fashionable quality, and a piece of good nature: whereby out of fear of distasting any body, or getting any ones ill will, all the duties we owe to God or *Church* or *State* are lookt upon as things indifferent, things wherein no one that would be thought civil and welbred is to be concerned: such is the universal decay of Religion, in all places, in companies, in friendships. To tell a friend of a fault, is not, as the world goes, according to the exact rules of *civility*. Why? what greater kindness can be done a man, what more christian and friendly office? If we see any thing amiss in his cloaths, or such mean circumstances, we count it very civil to tell him on't. Why not much more if ought be amiss in his manners? This is such a piece of *good nature*, such a mealy-mouth'd friendship, for want of a words speaking to let one do unhandfomly and dangerously: out of complaisance to let one go to Hell, this is a *civility* that the very Devil will afford any one. *Thou shalt love thy brother*, Lev. 19.7. and *shalt not suffer sin upon him*, is the divine Rule.

Thus that great *charity* of reprovng one another is born down with mistaken *civility*; and zeal to God's honour, and love to our *King* and *Country* reproached with nick-names, and put to shame. Tell one that *swears* in your company, he'll swear again you are a *pedant* and a preacher. Complain of any that affront the *Laws*, you are an *Informer*, an office no less in the thing necessary to the welfare and safety of any Commonwealth, then in the name through popular *mistake* grown odious. Wherefore the generality of men choose rather to decline their duty, though the honour of God, and the authority of the *Laws*, and the safety of *Church* and *Kingdom* lye at stake, then by doing their duty to get the hatred of their neighbours, or to disoblige those who perhaps are not to be obliged.

O dangerous *civility*! O wicked *good nature*! O mischievous *popularity*! that out of a simple fondness to a person or party, consents to publick ruin; that out of loathness to displease a friend, is consent to see God's honour suffer, and his friends soul perish.

Gal. 5. 22.

Christian *Religion* does not disallow the *civilities* of life, and the innocent *complaisances* and *intertainments* of company: nor does it require of us to wear a *Stoick* brow, or put on a *Cynick* morose humour of censuring and carping other people, where we come. No, this is contrary to that *meekness* and *gentleness* those fruits of the Spirit, which Christian Religion hath recommended to us. But for me, or any Christian, to stand by meekly, without expression of high dislike, and hear God's holy name blasphemed, and his honour wounded: for me, or any Englishman, gently to connive at treasonous contrivances against my *Prince*, or open violations of such *Laws*, as the peace of *Church* and *State* is concern'd in, without complaining and seeking redress: I say this *civility* of ours, or call it what we will, the fear of displeasing a neighbour, or a friend, and loosing his love, would make me accessary to that *blasphemy*, to that *treason*, and by being *accessary* to become *principal*, as 'tis in such cases.

Again, I do acknowledge that *Magistrates* and *Ministers* themselves may in prudence accommodate themselves to the peoples benefit and satisfaction, where they lawfully may. But for the *one* to neglect those duties he owes to God in his place, and for the *other* to conceal and stifle such truths as the present time and season call for and make necessary to be preached, on purpose to gratifie the people, that they, as to religious affairs may do what they list, and hear as they list: this would be the highest breach of trust, that either *Magistrate* or *Minister* can be guilty of; nor will either of them for this *popularity* of theirs, one day be either commended by God, or thank'd by the people, whose destruction temporal, as well as spiritual, must needs follow from such untoward indulgences.

Numb. 16. 41.

Look upon the examples of *holy men* in former times; with what *zeal* they acted in the cause of Religion; how far they were from being *popular*; how far from caring whom they displeased, whilst they did God and his *Church* service. One instance for all, *Moses* the meekest man upon the face of the earth; how roundly did he take up his elder brother *Aaron* for his popular compliance? with what zeal and fervour of spirit did he treat *Korah* and his Complices, the Schismatics of the Camp, though they had so many of the Princes of the people on their side, and the whole Congregation took their part, as appeared next morning when they came and expostulated with *Moses*, that he had kill'd the people of the Lord. O poor *Korah*! presumptuous self-will'd *Korah*! this came of thy *popularity*; thou fedst the people with fine stories, that *Moses* and *Aaron* took too much upon them, more then they could justify; that the *Levites* were as good as the *Priests*, and all the Lord's people were holy. Why then might not the sons of *Levi* perform the Priestly Office? why not the common *Presbyters* exercise *Episcopal* Jurisdiction? and why, say some, may not the *People* turn preachers too, as well as the *Priests*, since they are all holy? I, but what said *Moses*, It was you sons of *Levi*, took too much upon you. Was it not enough for you that ye were made *Ministers*, but ye must claim the *Ephod*, and be all *Bishops* too? 'Twas ye, abused people, took too much upon you. Was it not enough that ye were a *holy people*, of holy ordinances and ho-

Numb. 16. 7.

ly priviledges, of a holy profession and of holy promises; but ye must be a sawcy people, and take upon you holy offices too, which did not belong to you? Ah proud rebellious *Korah*! alas deluded people! Mark his end; this popularity of his cost him a miraculous destruction, when all the people and princes, not a few, that were for him, could not rescue him from the expecting jaws of gaping ruin.

Let me not be mistaken. I do not recount this severe *example*, as if I were of opinion, that Religion were to be forced upon people, or ought to be of a persecuting spirit. I do with all my heart pity any of those poor misguided *souls*, who have been led aside into error, as I pity my own sinful soul, and do as heartily pray for them, as for this poor soul of mine, for God's forgiveness and their amendment. But 'tis a plain case, when gentle means have been used and frustrated, a growing disobedience must by all means be curbed, and to prevent future mischief, punished, let it be never so *popular*; nay, the more *popular* 'tis, the rather; to secure good order and publick peace.

And thus much for *popularity*, wherein we have insisted the longer, by going over particularly the several conditions of men, whether *Magistrates* or *Ministers* or *private* persons: which in the rest of the heads we shall neither so distinctly nor so largely handle.

II. *Cowardise*: and indeed *popularity* it self was little else, as proceeding from fear, the fear of displeasing; though *that* fairly smoothed over with the varnish of obligingness; whereas *this* more plainly discovers it self. And possibly it might be thus with *Gallio*, at this time. Being entred newly upon his government, he might be afraid of the rabble. He knew not but the *Jews*, had he favoured *Pauls* cause, might accuse him as no friend of *Cæsars*; and but the *Greeks*, had he rescued *Softhenes* out of their hands, might in that boisterous humour have serv'd him in the same kind. It was well he came off safe himself, from the fury of the people, and made an honourable retreat.

And thus it is with most *Christians*, who though we have sworn fidelity to *Christ*, as our Captain in *Baptism*, and taken his *Cross* upon us, *intoken that we will not be ashamed*, and have ingaged to *fight manfully under his banner*; yet shrink from his service, when we find it hot and perillous, and are abashed at the approach of danger. It is a sad thing to consider how *bold* men dare be in venting heresie, in committing desperate sins; how *tame* and fainthearted men generally are in the defence of truth and the reproof of sin; how bashful in any cause of Gods.

Let a Canon-mouth'd *swearer* set his blasphemous mouth wide open against Heaven with execrable oaths; how is the whole company hector'd and brav'd out of their piety and that duty they owe to God? Let the honour of *Religion*, and the peace of the *Country*, be run down with swarms of *Sectaries*; who dare withstand a multitude, and stem the tide of a potent faction?

Some are so *cowardly* and so *bold* too, as to think, that the times may turn, and what will become of me then, if I should stir? and thus many are content to sit still, and neglect present duty, for fear of future possible inconvenience. But if the times should change, is my condition likely to be the better for not stirring? Suppose what is not to be supposed, the bloody *Papists* ever get the day in *England*, what *Protestant* expects to live? Suppose cruel *Sectaries* ever obtain, what honest man, what true *English*-man would not wish by a hundred deaths to prevent his seeing that day?



Josh. 1. 9, 18.

O mean poor spirited *Magistrates*, if they stand in aw of those they are to keep in awe; and *authority* must lay down its Commission at the feet of *faction*! 'Tis true, *prudence* is to be consulted, how to manage a giddy multitude; but courage and resolution is never to be laid aside: and the more prevalent and resolute any *party* is, the more need of courageous and resolute *Magistrates* to keep them under. *Be strong and of a good courage*, says God in his charge to *Joshua*, and *I will be with thee: only be strong*; as if he had said, let *Joshua* maintain his authority, and it will maintain him: let him stand up in the cause of God and his Church, and God will stand by him; and will honour those that honour him. 'Tis *resolution* (as he goes on there) must *make our way prosperous, and give us good success*. A *Coward* is so far from being a constant *Martyr* to his Religion, that he cannot be a true subject to his Prince, a faithful friend, a good neighbour, or an honest or useful man in any condition; as one whom his fear will readily prompt to betray his Prince, his Country, his Friend, his Religion, his Conscience, Soul and all upon any the least occasion.

Should times ever turn, as God forbid they ever should, we cannot but interpret it a just judgment of God upon us, to punish our *remissness*. He has put us into possession of our *peace, liberties, religious and civil rights*; let it not be said that we through our *cowardice and indifference* have put them out of our hands again. Now this fair advantage we of the Church of England have above all people in the world to encourage us against all trials from whatsoever parties, that as the *Papists* on one hand call us *Hereticks*, and charge us with *Schism*; and the *Sectaries* on the other hand charge us with *Popery*, and give our worship the title of *Antichristian*; so this very opposition of the *two extremes* is a very considerable argument (besides many others) that we are in the right, and that our Religion, in its doctrine, government, and way of worship is seated, (where *virtue* should be) in the golden mean. Not to say, what they cannot on either side deny, that none of them can expect the same terms from any of their own parties, were it uppermost, as they have now from the Church of England; much less the English Church look for the like from them.

III. The third ground of Indifference is *laziness* and *love of ease*: and this is but a spice of *cowardice* neither; a tenderness of spirit and a carnal indulgence. What need, thought *Gallio*, have I to trouble myself; do you look to it, I will be no Judge of such matters?

And who almost is not of *Gallio's* mind? who would not live quiet? and the best way to do so, is to be unconcern'd, and meddle as little as may be. What have I to do with the *Laws*? may a private man say; I am not bound to secure them. Let the *Magistrate* look to them: 'tis his business. Then as to *Christian duties*, there's reason enough against them, if they prove troublesome once. Such an one had rather break any of the *Commandments*, then break his rest; and it goes more against his natural conscience to be disturbed then to be damned.

'Tis right, one would not be troubled, if one could help it: and the Apostle has bid us *study to be quiet, and do our own business*; but when duty brings trouble in our way, we ought not to decline it: 'tis then *doing our own business*: but the ill fortune of it is, that publick business, which is every bodies business is no bodies business.

Besides, the very fundamental point of Christianity is *self-denial*, which is not at all consistent with this love of ease. Then further, for any man to say he is not concern'd in the publick, what other men do; is so directly

directly contrary to *reason*, that he cuts himself off from *Society*, which is cemented and soder'd with mutual concerns, and in effect *unmans* himself; *man* being in his nature a *social creature*, and the preservation of *society* one of the main designs of *man*.

But for a *Magistrate* or *Minister* to say or act thus, is much less excusable; because indeed such a *remiss* unactive person in publick, troubles every body else, through his not troubling himself; who for fear of burning his own fingers, lets the whole *Country* be on fire and burn on.

IV. But *fourthly*, it might be *Covetousness* and *self-interest*. There was nothing to be got by this quarrel; no forfeit, no fine to the Court, though that, God be thanked, cannot be pleaded now. *Gallio* could by troubling himself in this business have got nothing but *odium*: had the cause been heard, it would have brought him in no profit.

Thus every one steers according to his own interest, not the *publick*. This *private* interest has been the bane of the *publick*. Whatever the business be, *Quid dabitis* goes first; What shall I get by it? Be the business never so *bad*, you may have it done for money; be it never so just and *good*, you cannot have it done without.

But then as to the *Magistrate*; he is a *publick* person, and ought to be of a publick spirit: and there's no body, be he never so *private*, but is *natus patria*, born for his Countries service more then for his own.

This is the humour of the world, let *Church* and *Religion* go which way it will; let what will become of *Christianity*, so they can secure their own interests, all's well enough with them. A private man that hath a *trade*, and a shop to look to, what hath he to do (thinks he) with the *Church*? what is he concern'd in *Religion*? so he can maintain his family, and thrive in his calling, that's all he cares for. Here lies his Interest. *Trade* now with the dealing people is cried up for the Great *Diana*, to which *Government* and *Religion*, and all, if they might carry it, must strike sail. Here, says they, lies the Interest of the *Nation*.

But alas! 'tis a grand mistake, their Interest *lies*: for if they make a right estimate of things, their security is involv'd in the honour and stability of the Government, in the Churches peace, and the welfare of *Religion*: if that once go down, let them no more think themselves safe, then he that should sleep securely in his *Cabbin*, while the *Ship* were leaky and sinking.

After all, 'tis worse still to think that there are such *preachers* in the world, the *peoples Ministers*, as they call themselves; and they may well be so called, mercenary teachers, that make gain their godliness; that prefer their stipend to the Gospel, and care not what mischief they do to the Church for a livelyhood. And what's the main quarrel now betwixt the factious preachers and us, but that they being men obnoxious, and of mean parts, cannot expect preferment in a regular way; and therefore apply themselves to the people, to say and do any thing as they would have them for their money, and vent *faction* and *schism* according to the rate is given for it? Poor malicious design this, to set the *Church* on fire, that they may warm their fingers at the blaze.

V. *Fifthly*, Downright *Atheism*; when people have no Religion in themselves, they care not whether there be any Religion at all in the world or no.

I should be loath to say positively there is any such thing in the world as an *Atheist*. I dare be bold to say, that in *judgment* there can be none: but if we look upon their *practices*, so far as Religion may be concern'd in them; 'tis to be fear'd there are many thousands of them mask'd under

Psal. 10. 4.

der the *Christian* profession. Else whence should that coldness in the concerns of Religion arise? I cannot say they think there is no *God*; 'tis impossible for any rational creature to bring himself to that resolution, whilst his reason is awake; he may, lull'd with his sensuality, dream of such a thing perhaps. But I dare say there are too too many that lay *God* aside out of their thoughts: so the Psalmist says of his Atheist, *God is not in all his thoughts*. And upon this score 'tis mainly, that the honour and interest of Religion suffers, and is run down to that extremity. This is that indeed has bred our *divisions*, and has been bred up by them. For where there are many Religions, various pretences; 'tis more then to be suspected, that most of them are false, and but pretences, since there can be but one true: whilst men of corrupt minds have carried on ill designs of their own, by stalking with Religion; and men of profane reasonings have taken advantages from so many hypocritical professors, so many *sub-dividers* in Religion, to fancy that in reality there is no such thing as Religion at all.

And such perhaps was *Gallio* here, a jolly frank man, that car'd neither for *Jew* nor *Christian*; and being a business of Religion, be it what it would be, would have nothing to do with it.

And to this head may be reduced a very common humour amongst us, of turning all the most serious and sacred concerns into droll and buffoonry: so *Grotius* reflects upon *Gallio's* saying here, he would be no Judge in such matters; *Benè responsum ut ab homine dulci*: Well answer'd, says he, of a pleasant man.

We have two or three *Causes* of this careless humour remaining; which will not belong to *Gallio*, but are peculiar to *Christians*; such as are *Curiosity*, *Satiety*, *Neglect of private Prayer*.

1 Thes. 5. 21.

1. *Curiosity*; when people are so fickle, and shift so oft, that they never settle to any principle or form. This must needs beget a great *indifference* and unconcernedness as to Religion in the whole. These are such as do indeed in the former part what the Apostle advises them, they *try all things*; but then they fall short in the later part of the advice, they do not hold fast that which is good: indeed they'll hold to nothing.

And for such as these (and they are not a few) they care not what Religion is set up. Nay, I fear, such may their desire of novelty be, that *Mahomet* himself would not be unwelcome, would he but afford them some change afterward, and not quite deprive them of that as they call their *liberty of conscience*, that they might be free to as many *opinions*, as that villanous Religion allows *wives*. Thus *liberty of conscience* (let them call it how they will) or a *toleration* of all Religions, has wrought in many mens minds such a licentious *indifference* to any Religion at all, that they care not what Religion be uppermost & in fashion, so it may not rule by law, and be so settled as to exclude others, and hinder choice. And this with many is the so greatly fear'd oppression of their *liberty*.

Numb. 11. 20.

2. Next *Satiety*, from whence also that *curiosity*, and even *Atheism* it self in some, might have its rise. When people are glutted with a thing, they care not what becomes of it. And may not this be fear'd to be our case? when the spiritual food comes out at our nostrils, and yet men die in their sins, as the *Israelites* did.

I dare confidently aver it, that the *famine* of the word is not so great a judgment, as the *surfet* of it is. When the heavenly *Manna* was loath'd, certainly it was a greater provocation to the Almighty, then when they murmur'd for want of bread.

It is just so with us: for sure great has the company of *preachers* been; but



but as sure our care of *Religion* so much the less. 'Tis a sad thought, the more *Sermons*, the less *devotion*; the more *preaching*, the less *practise*. In short, we have turned *Religion* into an arrant prittle prattle, and now we generally look upon it as no more.

I pray God, e're this generation pass, we live not to repent our wantonness; and I pray God we may repent it too. For how just is it with God to remove from us his *Ordinances*, which we have so wantonly abus'd?

3. *Neglect of private prayer.* There lies the trial of a *Christian's* spirit, whether 'tis touch'd with the true fear and awe of God; and then these holy retirements and private intercourses with God, do enlarge the soul, and make it capable of the benefits of his spirit. The reason why we find not that improvement, that satisfaction, that inward comfort and joy and warmth of heart in the *publick* addressees of our worship is, because we do not prepare our selves in *private* for his meeting. 'Tis the devotion of the *Closet* is to preserve the reverence and veneration of the *Temple*.

I have done with the *Causes*; I shall say somewhat of the *Effects*, the mischiefs and inconveniences which attend this remiss indifferent humour in Religion: and I shall be very brief. As first,

That it *disparages and disinterests Religion*.

Next, that it *dishonours and disobliges God*.

Then that it *dissolves the bands of society*.

Again, that it *deserves and disheartens authority*.

Lastly, that it *proves a fatal ruin to souls*; both our own and others.

1. *It disparages Religion.* When we that are *professors* seem unresolved, and shew our selves indifferent, it must needs make *Religion* appear a ridiculous mean thing; especially when *Magistrates*, whose main duty it is to look after it, and who are to be the defenders of it, have but a slight regard to it, and think it not worth their while; the *people* will be easily encouraged by their remissness to shew bold contempt and bid defiance to the authority of the *Church*, when it has not the *secular arm* to back it.

*Abraham*, though he were obliged to tender *Hagar*, yet when the bond-woman and her child perk'd up against the freewoman, he was bound in all honour and conscience to assert *Sarah's* rights by the Ejection of the other. So is it with the *Magistrate*, betwixt the *Church* and *Schism*.

2. *It disobliges God.* He has by an extraordinary *miracle* restored us (for he that denies it to be so, does not deserve the benefit of it) and we the people of *England* have been these ten years throwing up the miracle, and forfeiting the advantages of it, if God would have taken the forfeiture at our hands. For we disown divine goodness, if we do not improve it, and still depend upon it.

He that has been the *God of our mercies*, will be the *God of our strength*, if we will but adhere to him. But and if we leave him, whan can we expect but that he will leave us? and he can, I am afraid to think, as easily bring us back to the same or a worse condition; and though he has delivered us out of *Egypt*, can in his time for our continued provocations send us to *Babylon*.

3. *It dissolves society.* This remissness in the concerns of Religion is a *State-palsy*. It is Religion that does mainly unite the minds of people, by imparting to every member of the body the same *spirit of unity*, and tying them together with the *bond of peace*. When these influences are obstructed and intercepted, these ligaments slacken'd, the whole will languish.

If the *steerage* be unsteddy, the *vessel* must needs bulge, and toss from

side to side. We see *faction* is almost become the only measure and standard of *Interest*, and might they go on, it would be with us, as twas with the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, that we should not buy or sell, not so much as eat and drink with one another.

4. *It disheartens Authority.* The *Arabick* Interpreter by a pretty mistake has shrewdly rendred this place, that *none of them cared for Gallio*; and it appeared so by their rude demeanour in very Court. Whence is it that like the *Athenians* we have *bonas leges, malos mores*, as bad manners as we have good laws, but by the remiss execution of our Laws by the inferiour Magistrates?

Is it not sad to observe that while the *government* and *faction* are struggling for victory; a world of people, subjects to the *government*, and I hope no hearty friends to the *faction*, should stand by as unconcerned spectators, as if they design'd to wait the event, and then make their terms with the prevailing side?

The *factions* have a strange twohanded argument, on one side to move *pity*, on the other to raise *fear*: they tell us in the same breath, they are a very inconsiderable people, and a people very considerable; a poor *praying people*, I but we know, a sturdy *fighting people* too. Again, the *sober trading part of the Nation*, the more dangerous in that; since their *sobriety* fits them for close design, and their *dealing* gives them opportunities of communicating and keeping correspondencies and of increasing their numbers. Their *argument* makes against them; for if they are so *inconsiderable*, they may the more easily be reduced; if so *considerable*, as they would make us believe, 'tis high time they were reduced. They would have us remember the *Oblivion*, and yet will not give us leave to forget their demerits: for that *Act of grace* was design'd to secure their guilt for past crimes sure, not to encourage them to new ones,

There is besides another thing in the bosom. The *Lord* has a great *work* to do in these Nations; and they are *the Lord's people*, who expect to be intrusted in the doing of that work. They had it once put into their hands, but fell out among themselves, and fumbled and miscarried in it; but if ever we by our remissness put it into their hands again, we may assure our selves, they will do the work throughly.

5. *It ruins mens souls.* This has been the great shipwrack of thousands in their spiritual state, that there is no more vigour and zeal generally shown in the cause of God and Religion; the scandal of our *remissness* discouraging those that would be *good*, and hardning the *bad*, who resolve to be so, because we do not resolve, what by our *authority*, what by our *example*, to make them otherwise. This is that has broken us into so many *Sects*, and will yet break us more. This is that will at last, by all of us in our several stations, be highly accountable.

May God grant us his grace, that considering these inconveniences, we may quicken our zeal, to shake off this dangerous *indifference*, this careless humour, which has brought the whole concern of *Religion*, together with the publick *safety*, to that extremity, that without God's great mercy, and our speedy amendment and better care, we are not very secure of either; that we may confirm our selves in the resolutions of his service, and settle the assurances of his favour towards us, and that both in *publick* and *private* we may so order our regards to him, in all parts of his *worship*, in all instances of our *conversation*, that he may delight to be with us, to bless our government, and to prosper all our undertakings. The God of peace and truth establish truth and peace among us for many many generations. *Amen.*

FIVE  
SERMONS

FORMERLY PRINTED:

V I Z.

- I. *The Churches Peace Asserted upon a Civil Account.*
- II. *An Afsize-Sermon, or SAMUEL in Circuit.*
- III. *A Sermon at the Obsequies of the Right Honourable the Lady Jane Cheyne.*
- IV. *A Sermon at the Funeral of M<sup>rs</sup> Mary Alston.*
- V. *HEZEKIAH's Return of Praise for his Recovery.*

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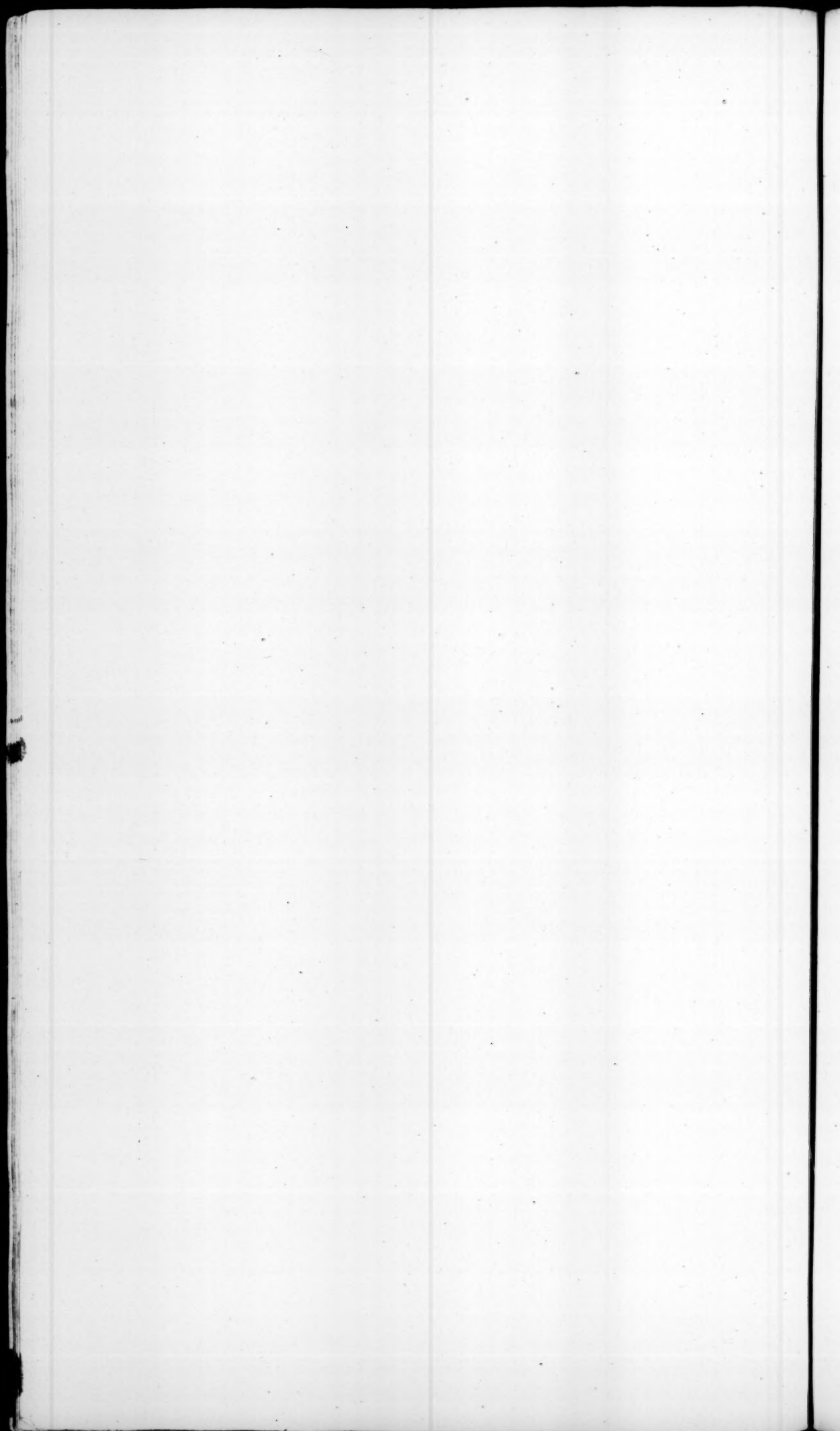
By ADAM LITTLETON D. D.

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L O N D O N,

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# The Churches Peace asserted upon a Civil Account.

A Sermon Preached in Guildball Chappel, Sir  
William Turner then Lord Mayor, July 4.

1669.

Psalm CXXII. viii.

*For my Brethren and Companions sake, I will now say,  
Peace be within thee.*



HE *Occasion*, upon which this sacred Ode or Psalm was penn'd, a Reverend Person in his *Annotations* tells us, he believes, was *Dauids* return to *Jerusalem*, to the Publick Service of God again at the Temple, after *Abfalon's* defeat. *Calvin* is of opinion, that *David* made it at the time when the Ark was settled upon Mount *Sion*, and the building of the Temple designed, for the uniform Exercise of the National Religion.

Upon either account it will very well suit with our *Meridian*.

The whole Psalm is an Elogy or Panegyrick Description of the Metropolis of *Judea*, the City of *Jerusalem*: and that not only nor so much upon the Civil account, that there are set Thrones of Judgment, the Thrones of the House of David, *verse 5*. That 'twas the Imperial City, where the King kept Court, whence Laws were issued, and Authority derived for the Government of the rest of the people. There sate the *Sanhedrin*, the great Council of the Nation; and there the supream Courts of Judicature, which received Appeals from all inferiour Districts: But also and much more upon the Ecclesiastical account; this City being the Residence of the great King, the Lord himself, who had set his Name there, and chose the Temple for his dwelling-place. Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, (or, more exactly to the Original, according to the testimony for Israel) to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord, *Verse 4*.

Matth. 5. 35.

This City then was the appointed place of Gods publick and solemn Worship, whither all the people of that Country (the males at least) were thrice a year, at the three great Festivals, obliged to come up to present themselves before the Lord in the Temple, according to the testimony of Israel, or for a testimony to Israel; that is, by a perpetual

Deut. 16. 16.

\*\*\*\*\* A 2

Statute

Statute and standing Ordinance to that people: the Laws of God being usually in Scripture-language styled *Testimonies*.

Now that there was, by this *Testimony* or Statute for the Tribes coming up to *Jerusalem*, designed a strict *Uniformity* in that peoples Exercise of their Religion, is of it self clear in the very History; for the Tribes did not every one bring up a *several Form* of Worship along with them, but all as one man made a solemn appearance together at the Temple in one joint Acknowledgment and regular Service. And Mr. *Calvin* tells us as much, that God appointed one Temple and one Altar on purpose for the whole Nations use; *ne populus in varias superstitiones diffunderet*, that the people might not, by being left to their own liberty in the Worship of God, run loose into a world of wild opinions and practices about matters of Religion.

And that further by *Jerusalem*, whose *Peace* we are here to pray for, is to be understood the Church, as it is the appointed place of God's publick Worship, appears by the very context of the *Psalms* it self, which begins and ends with this Notion, *verse 1. I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord:* and then in order to this 'tis said, *verse 2. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem*, that being the ready way to the Temple: and in the last verse again he concludes, *Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good, i. e. the good of Jerusalem in its Ecclesiastical State; as the House of God, the Temple, the place of solemn Assembly, belonging to it.*

And thus *Calvin* expounds that of the third verse, *Jerusalem is built as a City, that is compact together*; or, as the common Translation has it, *As a City, that is at Unity in it self*: not for the uniformity of the buildings, but, says he, *propter civium consensum*, for the unanimity and mutual agreement of its Citizens in the Worship of God and in the Exercise of Religion.

And that the People should all thus joyn their affectionate good wishes and most earnest endeavours for the *Peace* of *Jerusalem* thus considered, to seek the prosperity, and to promote the welfare of the Church, in a fair compliance with publick Order, and in a quiet regular Exercise of the National Religion, the *Psalmist* here in the close of the Psalm brings no less then three *Arguments*.

1. From every man's personal concern in the Churches safety. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper, or, they shall be quiet and at ease, that love thee; i. e. God will bless such persons with a quiet and a happy life, that love the Church, and wish her well, and pay a regular obedience to her Orders and Government.*

And this upon a meer *Natural Principle* of self-love implanted in every man's breast, and of that charity, which, we use to say, begins at home; the parts being all safe in the preservation of the whole; every private man's Cabin secure, while the Ship of Government steers right: whereas those, that by wilful disobedience contrive publick disturbances, manifestly hazard their own prosperity in the general Confusion, and at long run do themselves no less mischief than they designed the Church, drowning for company in the miscarriage of the Vessel.

2. For that, which ought to be every honest mans next consideration, for the good of Community: for a Heathen could say, *Non nobis solum nati sumus, &c.* we are not born only for our selves, but our Country, our Kindred, our Friends, our Brethren and Companions, challenge a great share in us: so that, if a man cast up his obligations aright, he ought not



not so much to live to himself, as to the Publick; and this much more upon the score of Christianity, where *Self-denial* is the main Principle, and *Charity* the grand Duty. And this Argument is represented in the Text, *For my Brethren and Companions sakes*, for my Friends and Country-men, for my Neighbours and Relations, *I will say, Peace be within thee*, or, as in the reading Psalms, *I wish thee prosperity*.

And this is upon a *Civil* account; the *Peace* and prosperity of the *Church* being likely to procure the settlement of good order, and the establishment of peace in the *Civil State*: whereas quarrels about *Religion* seldom or never end there, till they have involved the *Government* and Policy of a Nation into dangerous Consequents.

3. From that, which, though set last, ought to be considered and resolved on in the first place by all pious men, that have any sense of God's Honour, any zeal to his Name and Service, any love or kindness to his House and Ordinances; *from the Worship and Respect due to God* from his people: *Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good*.

And this upon a *Spiritual* or *Religious* account; to love the *Church* for the Churches sake, and to do it all the good we can for the Honour of God, as well as for the Benefit of our *brethren and companions*, that so we may *under our King live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*, as our *Church* has out of *S. Paul* taught us to pray. 1 Tim. 2. 2.

Being to speak before this *Honourable Assembly*, with whom the Care and Government of our *Jerusalem*, this once famous *City*, is intrusted; I have made choice of the *second* of these *Arguments*, which shews how *Civil Society* is concerned in a quiet Exercise of the *National Religion*: wherein the *Psalmist* makes it his resolution, and recommends it to us all, *to pray for the Churches peace*, and to wish her prosperity, *for our brethren and companions sake*, in the behalf of our Friends and Country-men; as we wish well to our King and Country, and stand well affected to the Government and the Laws; as we hope to see the Nation thrive, Trade flourish, the City rebuilt, and all our friends and acquaintance in a prosperous condition: the *peace of the Church* and the peoples agreement in the Service of God, being the only probable means of securing and ascertaining our *Civil Interests* and Publick tranquillity. *For my brethren and companions sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee; I will wish thee prosperity*.

In the words we have two things fall under our Consideration.

1. A Duty recommended to us in *David's* Example and Resolution: which is to wish *the Churches peace*.

2. A strong Motive to enforce this Duty: *for our brethren and companions sakes*; out of that love and affection we bear to the Publick and to our native Country.

1. The Resolution of *Duty* express'd in the latter Clause of the Verse: *I will now say, Peace be within thee*: where, though our *English* render it as the common form of Salutation used amongst that people, when they met or parted with one another: as our Saviour ordered his Disciples, when he sent them forth, *Luke 10. 5. Into whatsoever house they entered, first to say, Peace be to this house*: and thus our *Church* has in her Offices for the *Visitation of the sick* after our Saviours Example ordered, that the *Priest* entering into the sick persons house, shall say, *Peace be to this house and to all that dwell in it*: and certainly when ever we address our selves to God's House, the *House of Prayer*, 'tis very comely 1 Th. 5. 9.  
and

and most meet, that we should all of us salute her in this Form, *Peace be within thee*. Yet this I take to be too narrow a sense; for the Form of Salutation was somewhat different from this; and it should have been said, if that had been all intended, *שלום לך Peace be to thee*; not *שלום בך Peace be in thee*.

Therefore the rest of the *Interpreters* take it in a wider sense by a plainer construction; *I will speak peace*, say they, *in thee*: and thus it may be the *Magistrates* part to speak peace with Authority, to command it, and to see it kept.

Jer. 15. 10.

Psal. 120. 7.

Say others, *I will speak peace for thee*, in thy behalf; and that belongs to the *Minister*, to preach up the peace of the Church, even with that earnestness as to quarrel for it: though with *Jeremy* he become a *man of contentions*, in a perverse and froward generation, while he does so; and when he speaks of *peace*, others make themselves ready for war.

The *Septuagint* and *Vulgar* read it thus, *I will speak peace of thee*, or, *concerning thee*, that is, to speak kindly of it, and to wish it well; and thus it will concern all the *People*, the generality, every man in the Nation.

And I am afraid, there is but too much need, that both *Magistrate*, and *Minister*, and *People*, and all, should all of us bestir ourselves, and contribute our utmost endeavours for the *Churches peace* and welfare, if we will but do what we ought to do, and that out of *Interest* as well as *Duty*, for our own and our Countries sake; for that's

2. The *Motive* and Reason, with which this Duty is back'd, indeed faced and put forward with, in the beginning of the verse; *for my brethren and companions sakes*; whose good, will they, nill they, be they the Churches friends or foes, is to be sought in the preservation of the Church: for as the *Churches peace* depends upon the union and agreement of these *brethren and companions*, so on the other hand, in her peace and prosperity is comprehended the happiness and nearest concerns of us all.

By *Brethren* is meant Kindred and Relations, the *charitates naturales*, in a strict sense; but according to the larger acception of the word in the Hebrew language all our *Country-men* from one end of the Nation to the other, all that live under the same Laws and Government; especially those that are of the same household of faith, and profess the same Gospel of Peace.

By *Companions* or *Friends* are to be understood those of a stricter and closer Alliance, with whom we have contracted nearer and dearer familiarities; above all, those that agree with us in the same *Orthodox* Judgment, and walk regularly and lovingly with us, according to the same Rules and Institutions of God's publick *Worship*, whose concerns are more immediately united in the *Churches* welfare: which we are in that manner to preserve and promote for *both* their sakes, as not to exclude *either*.

And thus much for the *coherence* and *explication*, which I have the longer insisted upon, to gain your full assent to these two things.

1. That by *Jerusalem* here is meant the *Church*. And 2. That by her *peace* is to be understood our *agreement in religion*; since without this agreement there is no probability, no likelihood of her enjoying peace.

I shall now crave leave to gather up all I have to say into one *proposition*; and such a proposition, as the words do naturally, without any force put upon them, afford us. And 'tis this, in the words of the Text, *That we ought for our Brethren and Companions sakes to wish and endeavour the Churches peace.* Which in a brief *Paraphrase* speaks thus; That 'tis the duty of every Man amongst us, whether *Magistrate* or other, as he is the *Governour* or *Member* of a *Society*, upon a meer *civil* account, out of affection to our *Native Country*, and for the good of *Community*, in our several places and stations, heartily to wish, and vigorously to endeavour the *peace* and prosperity of the *Church*, in the uniform exercise of *Religion* and God's publick worship amongst us.

And this *Proposition* I shall make good by three *Arguments*, taken

1. From the ground of a Peoples happiness, *Divine favour* and protection; and that *favour* not to be procur'd, but by keeping up God's publick honour amongst us; and that *honour* no way to be secur'd, but by our unanimous agreement in his publick *worship*.

2. From that influence, which *Religion* is apt to have upon the minds of Men, both in *awing* them and *uniting* them: which *awe* and *union* both without the uniformity of *worship*, if People be left to their own liberty to worship God publicly how they please, must of necessity in time utterly be lost; and when *Religion* shall once be brought into a publick contempt, and made the ground of an universal quarrel; when the candlestick is once removing out of the *Church*, 'tis easie to foresee what danger the *State* will then be in, and what will in a short time become of such a People.

3. From the particular constitution of our *Laws* and *Government*, wherein the Concerns of *State* are so intimately and closely link'd with the *Peace* and prosperity of the *Church*, that they must needs stand or fall together.

I. *First* then for the first *Argument*, that the *Peace* of the *Church*, that is, our agreement in the service of God, is the only way of keeping up God's publick *honour* amongst us, and consequently of ascertaining to us the *favour* and blessing of God, which is the main and only ground of *National prosperity* and happiness, the great concern of all our *Brethren* and *Companions*. Wherein I have three things to make out,

1. That *The Divine favour is the main and only prop of a Peoples happiness.*

2. That *The setting up God's honour in publick amongst us is the only means of procuring and ascertaining his favour.* And

3. That *Our agreement in the service of God is the only way of keeping up his publick honour.*

1. I say first, *That the favour of God is the grand support and alone foundation of any peoples prosperity and happy estate.* This is the *Paladium* of the *Government*; *ancile imperii*, the Buckler of *State*; when, as the *Psalmist* expresses it, *God encompasseth us with his favour*, as *Psal.* 5.12. *with a shield*; whereupon it is, that by virtue of this divine influence upon his *Vice-gerents*, the *Magistrates*, they themselves are also term'd *Psal.* 47.9. *the shields of the earth.*



Gaffarel.

A learned *Frenchman* tells us, that the Eastern people were wont, at the building of any City, according to the positions of Heaven at that time, by rules of *Astrology* and other *Magical* observations, to make Artificial Sculptures upon Brass, which they call'd *Talismans*, and to consecrate them to the auspicious beginnings and fortunate success of that City: which they fancied, as long as those *Hieroglyphicks* were preserved, would never miscarry by fire or water, war or plague. And of this nature and design he takes *Laban's Teraphim* or Images to have been, which his daughter *Rachel* stole away; and those of *Micah*, which the boisterous *Danites* plunder'd him of: as the pledges of good fortune to those Families, who were therefore both much concern'd in the loss of them.

Gen. 31. 19.

Judg. 18. 12.

To the same purpose the *Grecians* and others (indeed who not?) had their *Tutelur Gods*, as the Guardians of each City: so that the first thing Enemies did, that came to besiege a Town, was to call away their God, either by enchantments inticing him, or by extraordinary respects outbidding the Inhabitants, and proffering the Deity better terms, if he would come over to their side: insomuch that the *Tyrians*, when *Alexander's* Army beleagu'd them, upon such an apprehension of *Apollo's* leaving them, tied him fast with a Golden Chain to *Hercules* his Altar, that he might not stir. And 'twas a great part of their policy among these Heathens, to conceal these their strengths, and keeps them close, as the *arcana imperii*, that in time of danger they might be sure of them.

From these and the like superstitious usages, this serious truth at least may be learnt, that very *Infidels* and Strangers to the Commonwealth of *Israel* had, from the instincts of Nature, that sense of a Deity and an over-ruling Power, that they trusted not to the situation and strength of their Cities, to the number or valour and wealth of the Inhabitants, for the defence of them; but wholly imputed their safety to divine protection.

And this much more to be acknowledged by Us, to whom God has made himself so well known in his *Word*, with whom he has entred into *Covenant*, whom he has admitted unto so endearing nearnesses to himself.

Psal. 84. 11.

Psal. 18. 2.

Psal. 20. 5.

Our *Royal Author* is every where full of these acknowledgments in this his Book of Publick Devotions, calling God a *Sun and a Shield*, his *strong Rock, and Tower of Defence, and mighty Deliverer*; ascribing all his deliverances and preservations to the *light of his countenance and the saving strength of his right hand*.

Particularly in *Psal. 144.* where he does *ex professo* handle this Argument, he says, 'tis *he that gives Victory unto Kings*; and then having recited the several instances of a peoples outward prosperity, *That our sons grow up as young plants, and our daughters as the polished corners of the Temple; that our garners be full and plenteous with all manner of store; that our sheep bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets; that our oxen be strong to labour and in good plight; that there be no invasion upon us, no leading into captivity, and no complaining in our streets*; he closes this account with an acclamation, wherein he resolves the sum of all into divine favour, as the ground and original of all these blessings and advantages: *Happy are the people that are in such a case: happy, I say, are the people which have the Lord for their God.*

But

But yet more closely to your purpose in *Psal.* 127. he tells you, *Except the Lord build your houses, they labour in vain that build them.* If God be not the Master-builder, the great Undertaker of the Work, you do but *edificare in ruinam*, build up your ruin to farther ruins: And then too, *unless he keep the City*, when 'tis built; *the watchman waketh but in vain.*

May he build your *houses* for you, to be habitations of peace, and preserve your *City*; make it beautiful for situation, and the joy of the whole Land: may God be well known in her Palaces for a Refuge; may *Psal.* 48. 2, 3. he love her Gates, and may the most High establish her, and raise up his own Tabernacle in the midst of her: may he make it the City of God, and the Mountain of his Holiness.

God does, that I may with reverence speak it, by the very inclinations of his own nature, peculiarly affect *Man*; and then further, he that said, *It is not good for man to be alone*, he has a more than ordinary care and regard for *Societies* of men. Well govern'd *Cities* and well order'd *States* are the special objects of Almighty God's singular providence. And as he has this care for our good in community; so it must be our care to keep up his *honour* in publick: since, which is our next,

2. *The setting up Gods honour amongst us in publick is the only means of procuring and ascertaining his favour.* The condition of his covenant with all Nations, as well as his own people, is, *They shall be my people, and I will be their God*: when we cease to be his people, we must not hope that he will continue to be our God. *Jer.* 32. 38.

All just governments are influenced and supported by him; but, if we abuse those influences and neglect those supports, 'tis just for him in displeasure to withdraw the light of his countenance and the saving strength of his right hand, and to leave us in the dark to the weakness of our own counsels and undertakings.

*He will honour them that honour him*; 'twas a pitiful request of *Saul*, to desire to be honour'd before the people, when he himself had dishonour'd God before them. When *Governours* are like God, and act all to his glory, as he himself does; then blessings are showr'd down upon them, and from them to the whole Community. *1 Sam.* 2. 30. *1 Sam.* 15. 30.

This was *Christ's* own case: *Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows*, *Psal.* 45. 7. 'Tis not the Crown and Scepter, the Purple and the Mace, that distinguish the Magistrate from a common man; but the oyl of gladness, the divine benediction upon his doing righteous things. Then all his garments smell of *Myrrhe*, *Aloes*, and *Cassia*, out of his ivory palaces; when the fragrancy of publick example commands at once the veneration and imitation of all that are about them: whereas upon wicked Nations that forget God, and such families as call not upon his name, he pours out his severest indignation.

This the very *Poet* could observe to his Countrymen the *Romans*.

*Dis te minorem quod geris, imperas;*

*Horat.*

Says he: that they ow'd their success to their piety, and were made Commanders of the world for their obedience to their Gods. Nor is it strange, that God should, even in false Religions, bless people with outward prosperity and temporal success; for that honour they did him under wrong names and mis-apprehensions; since at

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bottom of all their vain conceits and idolatrous practises there lay *metus numinis*, the awe and reverence of a supream infinite power, wherein the notion of *Religion* in general consists. And he goes on, and tells them, that all their miscarriages, and all the calamities that had of late befallen that *City* and *State*, were to be imputed to their neglect of *Religion*.

How much more happy should we be, that have the truth of *Religion* amongst us, if we would but be true to it our selves? And if a pretended zeal for God's honour has, in our remembrance, made *Usurpation* thrive, and heap'd Palms and Laurels upon an unrighteous *Cause*: what advantage would real devotion do to the establishing of a just *Government*?

And on the other hand, how much more miserable and improsperous must we expect to be, then any wicked *Heathens* or backsliding *pretenders*, if we, having such advantages and such reasons both of advancing *God's honour* amongst us, fail in our duty, and do not, as we ought to do, for our *brethren and companions sake*, with one common consent and mutual agreement, praise God for his *mercies*, and fear him for his *judgments*, which he hath shewn in the midst of us? That's the last thing of this head.

3. That our agreement in God's service is the only way of keeping up his publick honour amongst us. When Cities and Societies here below look like the *Sedes beatorum*, the blessed company of Saints and Angels above, wherewith the Heavenly Throne is inviron'd, all serving God the same way in perfect harmony of worship: This is doing that, the Apostle says, *having our conversation in Heaven*, by bringing Heaven down to us, and being *all of one mind*, as we shall be there.

Phil. 3. 20.

For *brethren* thus to dwell together in the unity of profession and practice, is, as the *Psalmist* compares it, like the consecrating oyl upon *Aaron's head*, that ran down to the skirts of his garment, that is, all over from the head to the foot; the meanest person of the Nation equally sharing with the highest in the advantages of the Priesthood and one common Service. This is that *dew of Sion*, the Church, where God commanded the blessing, the blessing of peace and plenty.

Psal. 133. 2, 3.

Jcn. 1. 4.

A Church, as ours now is, without this unanimity, is but like the Ship where *Jonas* was, tosd and tumbled with winds of doctrine and waves of faction; till, at the upshot of all, when they all apply themselves to ther several gods, in their several ways of Worship, the *Jonas*, the only true Religion amongst them, is to be flung over-board.

God is a God of order and peace, and accounts himself highly dishonoured by our confusions.

1 Kings 18. 28.

'Twas *Baal*, that delighted to be served with loud cries and furious flashings.

It was the *Devil* with his forked foot, first brought in *Herese* and *Schism*; that, by multiplying Religions, he might make the world believe there was no such thing; and if there were, that people might not trouble themselves about a thing, where it would be so difficult not to mistake in the choice.

Thus, when this enemy of God and man saw, that the crucifying *Christ* would not be sufficient for the disgracing of Religion; he fell presently, even in the Apostles times, to divide him, for the puzzling of it.

It has been observed, that *Travellers*, that have been abroad, and seen *Religion* in its various dresses and forms, in the several Countries, where they



they have been, and in what different manners they serve God, are apt at last to turn *Scepticks*, arrive at a quiet indifference, and think it a matter of no great concern, what Religion they are of, or whether they be of any at all.

But alas! we have now in this *Church* that disadvantage, without travelling for it. Our people stay at home, and see fashions; and some (as *Travellers* use to put on the habit and garb of each Country, they go through) have appeared in all shapes, taken up all *Opinions* and *Forms*, and done exercise in them all; till at last they have taken the degree of *Doctors* in the *Scorners Church*, and have turned profest *Atheists*.

How do the *Romanists* triumph in our dissensions, make Bonfires out of our flames, and daily get ground of the *Protestant Cause*; whilst we *Protestants* our selves do their work for them, by unnatural quarrels destroying our common Mother the *Church*?

How do *Prophane* persons make themselves merry at the miscarriages of the *Church*, and harden themselves in their *Atheistical* Reasonings against God himself; when they see so much ado made, such zeal and heat shewn on all sides, about *Forms of Worship* and the *Circumstances of Religion*: when the mean while great Duties of *Christianity*, wherein the life and power of Religion lies, are by most of us of all persuasions too much neglected? and how can they chuse but think *Religion* it self a trifle, if that be it that makes us so earnest about trifles, and yet so regardless in those things, which the worst of *Atheists* themselves confess are necessary for the preservation of men, whether singly in their own Persons, or jointly in Society: such as are *Justice, Charity, Temperance*, and the like?

What can *Neighbour-States* and *Churches* abroad think of us, that, after God had so wonderfully restored us, to the astonishment of the world, we have so strangely and with no less astonishment, to the dishonour of God and our own shame, lost the *Miracle* and let it fall to the ground, and given up the *Cause* in a manner, to which God by his extraordinary Providences, and his Anointed our late Sovereign the blessed *Martyr* by his unparralleld Sufferings gave such testimony?

And at last what can We our selves look for now, that God will yet work more *Miracles* for our preservation, who have, by our *divisions* in his Worship and our *Spiritual fornications*, not only forfeited his protection, but procured his displeasure, and at once both disoblged his *Mercy* and provoked his *Justice*?

To me, to speak what I apprehend freely, it appears, in the posture we now stand in, a very shrewd *symptom* and a dangerous *indication*, that God himself and *Religion* and all are now about to take their solemn leave of the *Country*, together with the *Churches peace*.

And then what will become of our *brethren and companions*, for whose sake we are to endeavour the *Churches peace*; when God has once forsaken the Land?

And thus I have done with the first *Argument*.

II. The second is, that *the peace of the Church* in the uniform Worship of God is a necessary expedient to make *Religion* the happy instrument of *Government*, by securing that influence it has upon the minds of men, in *awing Subjects to obedience*, and *uniting our Brethren and Companions in love*: without which *obedience and love*, 'tis impossible that any people should hold together, and prosper; since, where discontents and divisions prevail, a Society must needs of it self naturally tend to dissolution.

Matth. 12.25. A House, a City, a Kingdom, divided against it self, cannot stand; is a *State-Aphorism*, we have from the mouth of Truth it self.

So then, whether 'twere *fear* or *love*, was the Principle, which gathered mankind into Nations and Commonwealths, and brought them to live in Community under the same Laws and Priviledges, we find them both in *Religion*.

2. Tim.

Whereupon 'tis the remark of a *Roman* Historian, that, as *Romulus* founded the City by Arms, so *Numa* settled it by Religion, and then came *Ancus* and found leisure to adorn it with Temples and publick Buildings. Thus *Religion* secured the acquits of the *Sword* on one hand, and prepared the design for the *Truel* on the other.

Neh. 4. 17.

And till *Religion* be in a better condition amongst you, then for ought I see 'tis now in, I cannot tell, what you may think of your *Building*. 'Tis true; it seems to me, in our present divisions, that, much what like the *Jews* after their return, we rebuild our City with a *Sword* in one hand, and a *Truel* in the other: but so, as if that *Sword* were to be used against our selves, not against an Enemy, as theirs was.

Psal. 122.7.

I wish heartily, that the *peace* of the *Church* may be so settled amongst us, and the rubbish of our late ruins there removed, that you may lay your Foundations upon a fair even ground, and raise the Superstructures with comfort and honour; that, when you have built up your Walls and your Palaces, *Peace may be within your walls, and plenty within your palaces*: which would then most certainly be, when, as you are obliged to an *Uniformity of building* the City, so the Citizens themselves would joyn all in an uniform Exercise of *Religion*; whose first Character it is, that

1. It *awes* the consciences of men, and binds them up to their good behaviour, in a strict attendance upon the duties of every one in his place, and a careful obedience to the Law in common.

And thus *Machiavil* himself tutors his *Prince*, that he would put on the shew at least of *Religion*, to make his Government dreadful; though he hold it dangerous to his interest to be *bigotted* into it, and would have him take up no more of it, then will serve his turn.

But if the *mask* and *vizard*, the bare appearance of Religion be, in the esteem of carnal worldly Policy, so considerable a help to Government: how serene and awful would it be in its genuine native countenance? with what rays of Divinity would the *truth* and *power* of it cloath the Magistrate; that the people would behold him as an Angel of God? For since all *Government* derives its power from God, the more of God it shews, the more powerful it must needs be.

Wherefore, if once *Religion* grow mean amongst a people, no wonder, if they grow familiar and sawcy with the *Government*, and, having got the reins of conscience upon their neck, run away with their Rider, and 'tis well if not dismount him too.

When men are suffered to set their mouths wide open against Heaven, to blaspheme God and deny him in a breath, and to droll in Scripture-language, and jeer at sacred things; how can it be expected, that earthly *Majesty* should preserve its reverence with the people, but that God will suffer some to be as bold with their Governours, as they have suffered others to be with him: that by way of *Reprisal* he may recover his lost Honour, and those, that have slighted him, may be meanly esteemed? For, as God subdues the people under their lawful *Prince*, so it must be the *Princes* care to subdue the people to God, by keeping up the awe and port of Religion.

1 Sam. 2.30.

1 Sam. 18.47.

And

And this is done in the *uniform* and unanimous Exercise of *Religion*. Then the *Church* shews like an *army with banners*; For the *Church tri-* Cant. 5. 4.  
*umphant*, no body doubts but 'tis so: but this is spoken of the *Church*  
*militant*; it should be so; a well ordered and disciplined body of men.  
 Without discipline and good order and uniformity of Exercise, it may be  
 a *tumult*, a *mob*, a crowd or throng of men, but not an *Army*: or if  
 an *Army*, 'tis but a broken routed one, and needs rally and recruit. And  
 such an *Army* must I call our *Church*, with her broken Ranks; when so  
 many flie daily from her Banners, and repair to other Standards; when  
 some are so hardy to make themselves Commission-officers, and appoint  
*Reudevous*, and make Musters in private corners; indeed, in publick  
 Assemblies, to the defiance of the Church and Civil Authority at  
 once.

Truth is; Our divisions have made *Religion* a ridiculous thing; whilst  
 every *Party* priding it self in the glare of its own spiritual knowledge,  
 looks upon the rest with contempt.

The *Sects* wonder at us, that we sliue where we do, and not come up  
 after them: we as much wonder at their unkindness in leaving us, and  
 their confidence in going so far. And the wonder goes round: for they  
 all admire and pity one anothers ignorance.

All of them see a great light in the way they walk in, and conclude  
 they are got into *Goshen*; when all the rest of the world, as they fancy,  
 are still sitting in *Egyptian* darkness.

Thus we censure one another, and, when we have hoodwinkt our  
 selves with our own form, think our selves the only seeing people, and  
 all else, that are not as we are, blindfold; to the merriment of by-stand-  
 ers, but withal to some peril, lest from this giddy reflections, we make  
 upon one another, they conclude, we have no light at all amongst  
 us in the *English Church*, but that we are now in *Egypt*, more then ever  
 we were.

What passime and advantage our divisions give *Atheists* and *Papists*,  
 I shewed before: I am now speaking of us amongst our selves.

Nor do these differences only stir the *spleen*, but the *choler* too, and  
 fill all Parties, as with spiritual disdain of one anothers ways, so with  
 zealous passion too against one anothers persons.

The *Sectaries* are scandalized at *Church-musick*, and look upon our  
 decent *Rites* and *Ceremonies* as trumpery, and reckon our *Solemnities*  
 of *Worship* contemptible things.

The *Orthodox* on the other hand are justly offended at their slovenly  
 familiarities with sacred things, and indeed with God himself.

So that 'tis clear, by dividing from one another, *Religion* has lost all  
 its *awe* amongst us, every sort of it being lookt on, as mean and despi-  
 cable, by all those that are of any other sort.

Nor must the *National Religion* think to find better treatment then  
 the rest, but rather worse; as lying under this peculiar disadvantage,  
 that those, who adhere to that, though never so conscientiously, lay  
 themselves open to a general censure of all *dissenters*, that they,  
 in that they side with the Government, are *pleasers of men*, and  
*time-servers*.

Besides, this is that, they all in strict judgment account to be to them  
*Antichrist*, that which *holds back* and hinders, that no one of them can  
 get up into absolute power.

And



And certainly they must be so good natur'd, as to *pity* the *Governour* himself, if his conscience be not of their model : I, and should he be but half so severe in the maintenance of his way, as they are zealous in theirs, perhaps *hate* him too, at least have but little kindness for him, who, as they *tancy*, keeps *Christ* out of his *Throne*.

Thus we see, if *Religion* be not tied up to rules, if it grow lawless, it will quickly become awless too, loose all its respects, and not be able to assist the *Government*, in the protection of our *brethren and companions*, whose concerns lie bound up in the *Churches peace*.

2. Nor Secondly, will *Religion* avail in its *second property*, which is to *Unite* ; unless God's worship amongst us be uniformly exercised. *Religio à religando* ; Religion has its name from *binding* up men, not only in themselves, binding up their spirits so, as to restrain them from publick disorders ; but as to one another too, binding their hearts together in mutual offices of love and kindness.

And thus, when we can walk together, as *brethren and companions*, to the house of God, and there take sweet counsel together, this is a kindly *Union* : when all the members of the *civil society* are guided and governed by the same spirit of the *mystical body*, and *hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life*.

This is the true *cement* which conjoyns Neighbours and Friends closer, then any legal priviledges and obligations can do. Without this, you build your City with *untemper'd mortar* : nor will it well bear the weather, when the floods shall beat, unless it be thus *compact'd together*, and and be *at unity in it self*.

And how can it rationally be expected, that *Religion* should bind us together, if it self be left loose, and tied to no rules and orders ?

I confess, the *Unity* of the *Catholick Church* may consist without the *Uniformity* of *particular Churches* among themselves ; and thus, notwithstanding some differences they have in ordering their own affairs prudently to their best convenience, and accommodating themselves to the necessities of time and place, still holding to the *Analogy* of Faith and sound Doctrine, and the rule of God's Word : I say, notwithstanding these differences in *externals*, we do own the *communion* of *Saints*, as an *Article* of our Faith.

But to say, that every *particular person* or party in the *same Church* has, by virtue of his Christianity, a *liberty* to disobey the publick orders of that *Church*, whereof he is a member, and to serve God, as shall, notwithstanding those orders, seem good to that party or person ; (for, as the party breaks, it will come to persons at last :) to take *liberty* in this notion, is to make it but another name for confusion.

Wherefore, what they say, is not true, being applied to *fellow-members* of the *same particular Church* ; that, according to our *Christian liberty*, and that *latitude* God has left things in, if the Church would leave them so too, and not bind, where he has not bound, this would prove the best expedient of *peace* and unity : for the way would be wide enough for every one to walk in ; we should not need jostle one another ; but though we used not all *one form* in our serving of God, we might be all of *one mind*, as to our civil concerns at least.

It were well, if *dissents in judgment* could be so managed, as not to beget *distances of affection* ; but this is a thing rather to be wished then hoped for. For, whilst every party thinks it self obliged in *conscience* to advance it self, even to the prejudice and ruin of the rest ; *Conscience* being

being a principle of that violence, that, right or wrong, it acts, like Nature, *ad extremum virium*, to the utmost of its strength and opportunity: hence it comes to pass, that *odia religionum acerbissima*, those heats and animosities which are grounded upon the cause of Religion, are the most dangerous and irreconcilable; by reason *Conscience* is engaged in the quarrel, whose tenderness of apprehension is worse then the jealousies of *love or power*, which will admit of no rival, cannot indure any competitor.

Thus it was betwixt the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, who did, upon the score of their Religions, so abominate one the other, that they would not so much as eat and drink together, or buy and sell, or converse in the ordinary civilities of *Good morrow* or *Good even*. John 4. 9.

So nice and squeamish a thing is distasted *Conscience*, out of fear of partaking with others sins, and fancying it can never be at distance enough from what it conceives a dislike to.

Nor is that a sufficient *salvo* to keep up *Unity* amongst us, that *we agree in Fundamentals*; (I wish we all did that) and that *we differ only in some things of smaller alloy*; the more to blame they that fall out about such things, and to the hazard of publick *Peace*, make endless differences and quarrels about things indifferent.

I must commend the generous *Charity* of some, that profess to *love all that have faith in Christ Jesus, whatever their Form be*: and I am of their mind, that our *Charity* is not to be confin'd to a *Party*, but to be extended to the whole *Community*, the Body of the *Church*.

But then 'tis a gross mistake, to think the *Church* it self, in its establishments, a *Party* in these our divisions; who is to be lookt on, what *S. Paul* says of *Jerusalem* here, as *the common Mother of us all*: and here- Gal. 4. 26. in lies the main of our *Charity*, to seek and secure the *Churches peace*, in endeavouring to appease divisions, and to reconcile her disobedient Children. This, I say, is right *Catholic Charity*.

As to those persons, who are seduced and live in errour, the greatest *Charity* can be shewed to them, is to reclaim them, or at least, if that may not be, for our brethren and companions sakes, to keep them quiet.

For to see the humour of *Schism*, after it has once broke off from the *Church*, how restless a thing it is, and how quarrel is apt to beget quarrel, till it have brought all into confusion; the *Seets* we have amongst us, do no more disagree from the *Church*, then they do from one another: 'tis *Ephraim* against *Manasses*, and *Manasses* against *Ephraim*, as well as both against *Judah*. Isa. 9. 21.

And though they all agreed, time was, too well against the *Church*, as a *common Enemy*; and, whilst her ruin was contriving, held together: yet no sooner had they obtained that, which was the design of them all, but they fell out among themselves about their particular ends: and when they had pulled down that, which they maliciously termed *Babylon*, the English *Jerusalem*, their language was so divided, that they could none of them build up a *Babel* of their own.

For the same Arguments which the *Presbyterian* Party had fiercely used against the *Bishops*, were by the *Independents* unanswerably managed against themselves: and then there succeeded more subdivisions; the *Baptized Churches* got up and bore sway; the *Fifth-Monarchy-men* made a bustle for the Rule; then at last arose the *Quakers*, a spreading Party, and feared by all the rest. What should I speak of *Free-willers*, *Ranters*, *Bedel's Followers* and *Naylor's Crew*?

It

It shames me thus to discover the nakedness of my Country; but it grieves me more, to think, these pretences are still on foot, and most of the *Parties* still owning themselves in their distinctions: who, though, in the general, as *Seets*, and equally obnoxious to the Laws, do by a kind of *Syncretism* unite; yet, had any one of them power in their hand, would be far enough from looking on the rest that dissent from them, as *Brethren* and *Companions*, or shewing that favour to any of them all, as the Church of *England* does now to them all together.

And so the Case stood with their Fore-fathers at *Frankfort*, *Amsterdam*, &c. where, in opposition to our *Liturgy* and *Discipline*, setting up purer *Forms* of their own, they could not agree; but were so zealous in their divisions (though it highly concern'd them, for credit of their new-found way and comfort of their exile, to have held together) till at last the Son excommunicated the Father, and one Brother the other. So giddy and lost a thing *Conscience* is, when 'tis once stept aside, and gone out of its way.

I could wish the moderate and sober men amongst them would consider this; that, if God should, in his just Judgment to the Nation, give them an opportunity of another trial, they may easily, if not blinded with self-conceit, fore-see the event, and in publick ruins read afore-hand their own disappointments.

But, they say, they have no such designs; they are quiet and peaceable men, they desire only to seek and to serve God; but that some of unquiet fierce Spirits amongst us will not let them alone: they intend no disturbance to the Government, but the Government disturbs them in their religious Exercises and Meetings.

The same Plea will serve for the worst of Malefactors; that, if the Law would let them alone, they are very quiet men: but, pray, who breaks the peace? he that looks after the execution of the Laws, or he that disobeyes them? he that disobeyes, certainly is the Aggressor.

I cannot say but *Ismael* and his Mother were hardly dealt with, and did suffer a kind of persecution; and yet the Apostle tells us, that *Ismaels* self was the Persecutor, for but mocking of *Isaac*: but this, were it sport or contempt, reflecting on the Heir of the Family, the Son of a Princess, (who in the Allegory is *Jerusalem* here) is interpreted Persecution; while the turning out of *Ismael* is own'd as just punishment.

And in like manner 'tis the *Seets* persecute the Church, by derisions and contempts; not the Church that persecutes them.

But if they are so well inclin'd to Peace, why then do they not do what they acknowledge may lawfully be done, and submit in those things where their Conscience may give them leave; i. e. in such things as God in his Word has not forbidden?

The Magistrate has bid them come to their Parish-Church; bid men of my Order renounce the Covenant: God hath no where commanded to the contrary. Why should not they come? why should not we renounce?

There can be no scruple in the case: for in things where God himself has given no order, we are to obey the Magistrate, not only for Wrath, but for Conscience sake.

We read, that our Saviour himself kept the Feast of the Dedication, though no where appointed by God himself, no where mention'd in the Old Testament, (an Apocryphal Feast) and taught daily in the Temple and

Gal. 4. 29, 30.

Rom. 13. 5.

John 10. 22.



and in their Synagogues; and that some of his Apostles, after the Ceremonies were dead and buried, came up to the Temple still at the *hour of Prayer*: to set us an example, that in such things, where there is no express command of God *against* them, though there be no express command *for* them, we are to comply with publick order and decent custom. If they would but do thus ingenuously, there would be some likelihood of *Peace*. John 18. 20. Acts 3. 2.

But they would have the *Church* submit to them; and then all should be well. Which of them? for they cannot all be comply'd with; that's impossible: for to take in *one*, and leave out another, will be the ground of further discontents; and to gather *all* at a cast into the *comprehension*, would possibly be to please none of them, at least to displease the better half.

If they would but once agree among themselves, and say what they would have, they would then have some fair pretence to be consider'd.

But here's the misery on't, 'tis very hard for them themselves to define what will satisfy *Conscience*: because that, being not engag'd upon certain Rules, may to morrow judge that necessary, the necessity whereof to day it doth not foresee; and if any mens Consciences are to be satisfied thus at random, the *Church* will never know, when it has done, but be still to seek upon new emergencies.

Whereas would they come to some certainty of *demands*, wherein the *whole party*, in all its sub-divisions, would agree, they might the better be treated with: there would be some hope in time of a good understanding.

But if their meaning is to be left to such a *latitude*, to do whatsoever they shall upon occasion find agreeable to their *Conscience*, i. e. possibly sometimes to their *interest* or *humour* to do: there's no body so void of reason, but must needs see of how dangerous a consequence it is to any Government, to leave any sort of men (whatsoever their Principles be, be they never so honest) to such a *Liberty*.

And such a *Liberty*, if they had it, would be so far from composing *differences*; that those everlasting quarrels and irreconcilable animosities, they have purely out of *Conscience* taken up one against another (which are now, partly in kindness to the common cause they are engag'd in, for the reputation of *Schism*; and partly for fear of the *Laws*, smother'd and kept in) would then instantly break out with violence into open flames: whilst some, sticking rigidly to those measures, they have already attain'd, and comparing themselves with themselves, severely censure those, that, upon pretence of greater *light* and more plentiful effusions of the *Spirit*, walk beyond their line and rule: And those on the other hand priding themselves in their *Spiritual Privileges*, and the *purity of Ordinances*, despise their Brethren, as carnal and narrow-spirited men, that still keep close to outward form, and walk according to the flesh, and the will of man, in the beggerly rudiments of the world. Gal. 4. 9.

Thus you see, if we do not come to an *agreement*, as I do not see, how we ever shall (unless Authority interpose) in the exercise of *Religion*, the hearts of Englishmen are never like to be *united*, either in brotherly love to one another, or in common affection to our Countrey: but that, the *awe and union* of Religion being lost, the hazard of the *Churches Peace* threatens disturbances *also* to the *Civil State*; which is

III. Our *third* and last *Argument*, taken from the particular Constitution of our *Government*, wherein the *Civil* and *Ecclesiastick* State are so nearly united, that, like *Hippocrates Twins*, they are both well or ill together, and run the same hazard of health, and must take share of the same fortune: so that, who wishes well to the *Government*, to the concerns of our *Brethren and Companions*, must by unavoidable consequence favour the Prosperity of the *Church*.

To prove this, I shall not pretend to the *Law*, though (however unkind *Lawyers* may be to the Churches interest in its *Jurisdiction*) there's enough in the *Law* it self to this purpose.

Nor shall I quote King *James* his Apophthegm, though he must be acknowledged a Wise man, and one that well understood the nature of Government.

Nor shall I tell you out of our own *Stories*, that men of this Robe have usually undergone the greatest Offices of *State*, and publick Employments; which 'tis very uncharitable wholly to impute to Church-mens ambition, and to allow nothing of merit in the case, upon which those Preferments and publick Trusts were grounded;

Nor what great *Benefactions* some of them left behind them to *Community* from those secular advantages, they were assisted with;

Nor yet shall I insist upon our own *experience* (an irrefragable proof) in the late times; when the design seemed levell'd only at the *Hierarchy*, but was carried on to the ruin of *Monarchy* it self, and the overthrow of *Prelacy* was so zealously prosecuted, that they brought all *Orders* into confusion, and *Mar-prelate* proved the *Mar-all* of the Nation. And if we did not buy wit then, at a rate dear enough, we may, if we please, make farther trial to our greater cost.

I shall only make a general *Propose*. That *Magistracy* and *Ministry* are the two *Pillars* and supports of *Society*, there's no body, I think, will deny; and if either of these *Pillars* fail, the whole Structure is in danger of falling: nor can publick order be secur'd, unless the two Swords, the *Sword of Justice*, and the *Sword of the Spirit*, assist each the other in the administration of affairs, and in the execution of their several Offices.

Now for any man to take upon him to be a *Minister*, or, if he be one, to exercise that Function, without the approbation, and against the plain sense of the *Law*, is as irrational and irregular a misdemeanour, and must needs be of as dangerous a consequence to the publick, as for any man to create himself a *Magistrate*, or to execute the office of a *Magistrate* without *Law*.

I say, for one that has no Commission, or has been put out of the *Commission of Peace*, to act notwithstanding, as a *Justice* (let him be as wise and as honest a man as he will) is sure a high crime: I know not how the *Law* may call it. And it is the very same, or worse, in the *Ministry*; because this office has a more immediate influence on the *Consciences* of men, the most busie and sturdy principle in humane Nature.

'Tis confest on all hands, that a man cannot exercise the office of a *Minister* without a *Call*. Let me ask them, whether theirs be an ordinary or extraordinary *Call*?

If *extrordinary* (by the way, 'tis *Enthusiasm* to say so) let them make it appear by Miracles and Languages.

If *Ordinary*, certainly they knew aforehand, before they came into *Orders* (for to such I speak) what the legal constitution requires of them, *i. e.* their *Canonical Obedience*; if they did know this, and yet came with a resolution to disobey, this is manifest *prevarication*: if they did not know, and their *ignorance* betray'd them into a snare, the men are to be pitied, but their *ignorance* is by no means to be excused: if they knew it before, and were then satisfied, but have been inlightned since, and changed their mind, they must know too, that that power, which gives men in *publick* place leave to *act*, may upon publick inconvenience suspend their acting; and if then they do *act*, 'tis an unjustifiable *disobedience*.

Nor is it with them, as it was with *S. Paul*, *Wo be unto me if I preach* 1 Cor. 9. 15. *not the Gospel*: He had another kind of *Call*, but for these there's a *Wo* belongs to them, if they do.

'Tis otherwise too, now the *Church* is settled under *Christian Magistrates*, and govern'd by *Christian Laws*, then at that time when it was to be planted under the Government of *Heathen Emperours*. The *Church* now, with all her subordinations and dependencies, in all her jurisdictions and powers, owns the *King* her *Supream*. She challenges nothing to her self, but what the favour of her *Prince*, and the *Laws* of the Land have allow'd her.

Thus *Bishops*, as to the execution of their Office, are sent by the *King* as *Supream*, and *act* in their *Courts* by the *Kings* power, as *Civil Courts* do: the *King* deputing *Arch-bishops*, and *Bishops*, to be Judges under him in causes *Spiritual*, and in his name to govern the *Ecclesiastical State*, as he makes *Lord Keepers*, *Chief Justices*, and other Judges of the Land in *Civil* affairs.

For had the *Church* any power in it self, besides what the *Laws* give her, I dare say, there's ne're a *Bishop* in *England*, but would speedily redress those scandals and grievances, possibly brought into their Courts by *Lay-Officers*, which people so much clamour against. But now what can they do? they are ty'd up by *Law*.

All of us, that are of the *Clergy*, own the *Civil Power*, pay the same obedience to the *Laws*, as any of you do; and in *First-fruits*, *Tithes*, and *Subsidies*, make as chargeable acknowledgments, as any of the *Populacy* do.

I know, 'tis said though, *What need of such a pompous costly Religion, of a Church with so great an allowance of means?* This ample Revenue exhausts and weakens the *State*: smaller *stipends* would serve turn very well.

But can any one, with any shew of Ingenuity, fairly reason against the Encouragements of *Learning*, and the Rewards of *Desert*?

Let it be consider'd, that several of this *Order*, had they gone another way, might (with submission I speak it) have sat in *your* Seats, and been clad with *your* Purple.

After all our *pains*, and *time*, and *strength*, and *charges* too, spent in studies, do not think that what the *Law* allows us, we have by doing nothing for it.

These things are propos'd publickly as the *Acquists* of *Industry*, and may be got and enjoy'd, as legally, as any of your *Estates*.



And is it not fit, do you think, a *National Church*, wherein the honour and reputation of *Religion* is to be kept up, should be secur'd from poverty, and that contempt, which always accompanies meanness?

Isa. 49. 23.

It were to be wish'd, that, as *Kings* are to be the *Nursing Fathers* of the *Church*; so *Princes* and the Sons of Nobles would fit themselves for her dignities: that they might bear up the honour of *Religion* with their personal attendance.

Hebr. 7. 1.

It has been so heretofore, when the two great Offices were united in the same Person; *Melchisedek*, King of *Salem*, and *Priest* of the most high God: and they were kept pretty near in the persons of *Moses* and *Aaron*, brethren; and the *Priest* elder brother to the *Prince*. And hence the Hebrew word כהן *Kohen* (whence not improbably we have the Name of *King*) signifies indifferently *Prince* and *Priest*: whereupon the Apostle, *Rom. 13.* calls the *King*, in Ecclesiastical terms, θεοῦ λειτουργός, and δούλος θεοῦ, *Gods Minister*, say we for both; 'tis *God's Liturgy-maker*, and *God's Deacon*; to shew too, that a *Christian Magistrate*, as such, has power to order religious affairs in the Service of God.

This I say, has been, and 'twere well, if it could be so with us: however, must the *Church* alone be held up by a precarious dependence? Is it not this that makes *Religion* a Prostitute to the humours of the people? when men of mean spirits and parts shall, out of fear, comply, for a paltry livelihood, to preach things that may please; and others of ambitious minds and voluble tongues, to serve an interest, shall lead the people to their own hurt.

But some will say, *What would you have men do that are not otherwise considered? since there is that unequal distribution of Church-favours, that some go away with all, and others get little or nothing.*

Judge in your own case, whether this be a reasonable ground of quarrel. Shall the inequality of Estates amongst you make the meaner Citizens quarrel the Government of the *City*, because they have not all the wealth of *Aldermen*? Shall I, or any of my brethren and companions, because we have not that place and esteem in the *Church*, as we, out of the pride of our own hearts may think we deserve, go in a sullen arrogance, and set up for our selves in a distinct interest from the *Church*; and lie in the face of our Mother, and put undutiful affronts upon her, for not being so kind, as we would have her?

No: Rather let every honest well-meaning man resolve; (*Gen. 49. 6.*) *O my soul, come not thou into such mens secret; unto their private assemblies, mine honour, be not thou united. Let them for me be divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel*, that, in their anger and self-will, practise such things.

To go on, I know it has been seriously discoursed, and printed too, that the largeness of the *Church-revenue* in any Nation impoverishes the *State*, lets the people behind-hand, and puts them out of a thriving condition: and no less then demonstration offered, that, if it were retrenched, Trade would flourish, Manufactures and Growths receive wonderful improvements, and the People generally grow rich apace.

But to Answer such Discourses and Scriblers; those *Commonwealths*, they speak of, and ours are not alike, in the constitution and nature of the Government; and God forbid they ever should. But it may be ones wonder, why our people cannot now, with much more ease, make those improvements, since the *Church* keeps little in her own hands, and for the most part lets easie penny-worths: nor can it be any reason, that the  
*Church*

*Church* drains the peoples money ; since, if the *Church* had not what she has, some body else would in the *Churches* right ; nor would the people be much the better.

How our *Neighbour-States* order their *Church-affairs*, I suppose, ought to be no precedent of Policy to us : though they too keep up a *National Religion*, by which those, they admit into publick trust, are brought to rest ; and, for the securing publick peace, amidst the differences of Religion, maintain a *standing Army*.

Further, why our *dissenters* should not, upon their own Bottoms, be comprehended within the legal settlement of the *Church*, they themselves give a very just occasion : for the very best Party amongst them have such Principles of Policy and Government, as are utterly inconsistent and incompatible, not only with any other *Form*, but with *Monarchy* it self ; as hath been clearly evidenced from their own writings and practices : and others there are, that do, in effect, loosen the bands of all *Society*, by excusing that duty *Servants* owe to their *Masters*, *Children* to their *Parents*, *Wives* to their *Husbands*, under a pretence of *seeking God* ; justify disobedience by the *Corban* of Religion ; and for any command of their Superiors, they like not, have a ready answer, that they are *to obey God rather than man* : whereas, on the contrary, there is no one thing that the *English Church* does in her *Doctrine* more positively affirm, or in her *Offices* more zealously express, then obedience to *Governours*, and her duty to her *Sovereign*.

To draw to an end in this *Argument* ; some there are, that fear not to charge the *Church* it self with *Sacrilege* ; and truly I must grant, that *Church-men* may be guilty, by imbezilling and mis-employing *Church-revenue*, which sure enough was mainly design'd for Pious Uses : but may not a man, that faithfully serves the Publick in his place, have some regard to himself too, in fair provisions for his own Family ? The Apostle tells us, that *he, that does not, is worse then an Infidel*.

1 Tim. 5.8.

To shut up all, and to drive this nail to the head, I do freely acknowledge, that the *Church* never flourish'd more under Pagan Governments, then when it was in the poorest condition for its temporals ; when it lay under Pressures and Afflictions, and had the Heathen-State its Enemy.

For *Church-men*, though in their Office *Angels*, yet in their Nature are still but *Men*, and, as S. James says of *Elias*, *quasi homines*, men of like passions and affections with other men, and are too too apt to yield to the soft temptations of peace and prosperity, and to be carried down the stream of a general corruption.

But shall any *Christian Magistrate* now design the Persecution and Ruin of the *Church* therefore ? This were to Argue with the Apostate *Julian*, to strip Bishops and Priests of their livelyhood, and to turn them out of all they have ; that they may be poor in imitation of their Masters Example, and in obedience to his Command may learn to contemn the World.

But, thanked be God, we live not now under *Heathen Emperours* and *Pagan Governours* : though, if we did, it were our duty to pray for them, and to thank God for them too, and to obey them in all lawful commands, and where we cannot safely obey, chearfully to suffer for a good Conscience.

Nei-

Neither is, nor ought the *Church* to be so now, as it was in the *Primitive times*, before it was settled under Christian *Magistrates*; though then too there was fair liberal allowance; and there's no Minister, we have, but would be contented to Preach at the *Primitive rates*, were our Auditors as free and open-handed, as they were then.

Prov. 20. 17.

In the close of all, these *sacred Morsels*, though they may seem sweet, yet leave gravel behind them: and this I dare boldly say, that the decay of the *Church*, and the disrepute of *Religion*, amongst any people, is a certain token, and an infallible character of that People's approaching Ruin;

Sen. Trag.

——— *Sic profanatis sacris  
Peritura Troja perdidit primum Deos.*

So that from the complication of *Church* and *State*, and the extream hazard each of them runs in the other's perils, we stand obliged, upon a meer *Civil* account, for our *Brethren and Companions sakes*, to wish the Churches prosperity and welfare, in our mutual Agreement among our selves.

Before I make an end, I think it necessary to take notice of an *Objection* or two, which may seem to overthrow the purpose and design of this whole Discourse.

For though it hath already been clear'd out of the Context, that by *Jerusalem* here must be meant the *Church*; and that the *Churches Peace*, which for his *Brethren and Companions sakes* *David* resolves to wish and endeavour, did consist in that People's uniform Worship of God: as appears further by that Churches sad experience, when *Jeroboam* drew off the *Ten Tribes* from their Allegiance, and (which is reckon'd his great sin, which he made the Children of Israel to sin) had, by setting up new forms of Worship, made their return, as well to the Thrones of *David* at *Jerusalem*, as to the Temple, impossible, and by a subtle contrivance of an establish'd *Schism* to render his *Rebellion* perpetually successful, divided them from their brethren in *Religion*, and made the breach irreconcilable; then by degrees the poor *Samaritans* fell off into all kinds of Superstitions and Idolatries, the *Statutes of Omri and Ahab*, and I know not what else gallymawfreys of Religion: and all this ground on the fair pretence of that Precise Sect, the *Karai* or *Scripturists* (as I may call them) who would admit of nothing, in the Worship of God, but what they found expressly commanded in the Law of *Moses*.

Obj. 1.

I say, though thus it stood with the *Jewish Church*, I foresee an *Objection* may be made, that our case is much different from theirs: for

John 4. 24.

First, Theirs was but a *Typical Ceremonial Service*, which in the *Gospel-state* has no place, since our Worship now must be *in Spirit and in Truth*.

And then again, for these very *Types* and *Ceremonies* they had a *Divine Command*, and were by strict Precept oblig'd to that uniform attendance upon the *Temple*; whereas such a precept or command now we have none, to tie us up in like manner to any one form of Worship.



1. To the first part of the *Objection*, that that was a *Typical Service* in the *Jewish Church*; but that the Holy *Jesus* has to the *Christian Church* brought *Grace* and *Truth*, which do not tie us up to such severe observances in external things, but have instated us into a *Liberty*, wherein we are commanded to *stand fast*; and therefore we are not to part with it upon any terms. John 1. 17.  
Gal. 3. 1.

I answer, that, though the *Ceremonies* of that Religion be abolished, yet the *Substance* of it remains still in the *Christian Church*: for the *Shadow* and the *truth* were to answer one another; and those *Types* and representations are therefore now to be made out answerably by us in real performances; so that the *Uniformity of Worship* is as agreeable, and perhaps more necessary, now to the *Substance*, as 'twas then to the *Shadow*; and the obligation proportionably the same upon us, as upon them.

For though God did, by the death of his Son, rent the vail of the Temple, and break down the *Partition-wall*, and so has brought us *Gentiles* into the Fellowship of the *Church*; it was, that we should in the same orderly manner serve him in *Substance*, as they did in *Ceremony*, and in suitable methods accomplish their *Types* with the *Truth* of our services. Eph. 2. 14.

They brought their Calves and their Lambs to the *Priest*, and had them by his hand offered in the Temple: *Christian Religion* has, for their *Priests* and *Levites*, distinct orders likewise of *Bishops*, *Priests*, and *Deacons*; and instead of a *Temple*, *Churches*, where the People, by the Ministration of the Priesthood, are to offer up their *Prayers* and their *Praises*, which are our *morning* and *evening Sacrifices*.

And thus for their *Temple*, their *Sacrifices*, their *Sabbaths*, their *Priesthood*, and almost all considerable *Instances* of their *Worship*, there is a perpetual uniform *Analogy* throughout betwixt Them and Us.

Only their *Worship* was perform'd in the *Shadow* of the *Law*; ours in the *light* of the *Gospel*: and if this *light* proves to us *darkness*, how great will our *darkness* be? For alas! that *liberty* they talk of, and that *light*, which so dazzles their eyes, that they cannot see their way, is quite mistaken by them. Matth. 6. 23.

That *light* was indeed design'd, to lead them out of the *Shadow*; but not to lead them into the *fire*; for of that nature all *Schism* and division is: and that *liberty* as it releas'd them from the bondage of the *Ceremonial Law*, so it doth not at all disoblige them from the *Moral Law*, but rather engages them to it with faster ties of gratitude. Jude 23.

Now, as I take it, the *Fifth Commandment*, which enjoyns obedience to the *Magistrate*, was never look'd upon as a part of the *Ceremonial Law*, but always accounted to have a *Moral* and a perpetual indispensable obligation in it. And I must assure them, that disobedience to a lawful Governour, in things not simply in their own nature unlawful (as most of them confess our *Liturgy* and *Rites* to be) is a great sin, and of dangerous consequence to their own Souls, as well as to the peace of the *Church*.

So that that answer they make the *Magistrate* in this case, is not proper; that they are not *free* to obey him: for they are by all Laws both of God and Man *Free*, nay more, *obliged* and bound to obey.

Only

2 Pet. 2. 15. Only let them, I advise, take heed of making that *Liberty* they pretend to, a cloak of Maliciousness.

2. Again, as to what they say, that the *Jews* had a peremptory *command* from God himself for their *Uniformity*; but we can produce no such for ours. I grant them; nor am I so fond to say, we have an express *command* set down in God's Word, for every rite and usage, our *Church* has thought fit, for Decency and good Order, to retain. Nor is it at all necessary it should be so.

No, neither had they for all theirs; as appears by *David's* and *Solomon's* ordering the *Quire* of the *Temple*, in the course of the Singers, making forms of devotion, and prescribing them for publick use, and instituting several other things, as occasion required, in that service. And the like may be said of *Asa* and *Josias* their *Reformations*.

And this those godly and wise *Governours* thought, they might with a safe Conscience do, even in that service which God himself had appointed; and that *Church* was never in a more flourishing condition then it was then.

And are they able now to produce any reason, why we should not believe, the *Governours* of our *Church* (of whom we own the *King* as Supream) to have the same power now, as they had then, upon the like occasions; and that the People stand equally obliged to accept the Proposals of publick Authority, in things of the same nature, that concern the Worship of God?

Especially, since *Christ* at his promulgation of the Gospel, in his own person, took care only for the weightier things, and left those of lesser alloy, which tend only to the Convenience and beauty of the *Church*, not to the Essence of *Religion*, to the care and prudence of the *Apostles*, and so from them to others, their Successors, *Governours* of the *Church*, to order the Affairs of each *Church*, as would be most expedient for the necessities of each *Church* in its Plantation.

And some of these *Apostles* sure, if I understand any thing, have left not only *Commands*, but *Examples* behind them too, which reach our case.

Acts 2. 45. For what means that which is said of the Primitive Christians, that they continued together, and were all of one mind: They were not sure met, some in one place, and some in another, in different forms to exercise their Religion; one part kneeling, another standing, a third sitting at the breaking of the bread. Let not such unhandson thoughts enter into our hearts.

Hebr. 10. 25. What means the Apostle when he chides some that slunk and withdrew from the Publick Assemblies, as the manner of some then was; he tells us? but that he would have them keep close to an uniform Worship, and not separate, and set up for themselves, in new fangle ways of their own.

Indeed what mean those many vehement perswasions to like-mindedness and brotherly love, which we meet with every where in the Apostles writings; but agreement in Religion? Since that love can be no way so well expressed, as in such an agreement; and upon trial 'twill be found impossible it should be maintained and preserved amongst us otherwise.

In a word, if that general Rule, the Apostle doth authoritatively set down, have not in it the force and purport of a Command, I am to seek what a Command is; Let every thing be done decently and in order. And how

1 Cor. 14. 40.

how in the same Church every one might have *liberty* of his own Methods to serve God by, and yet the *Decorum* of Religion, and the good Order of the Church, be nevertheless kept up; I must confess, I am still further to seek for my understanding.

As to the main; let them talk of *Christian liberty*, as they please: that cannot reasonably be pretended, to justify publick disorders in any *Christian State* or Church.

This may be rational to suppose, that the several Churches, according to the nature of their several constitutions, in several Countries, were left to a liberty, upon prudential reasons, to order their own affairs, to their own convenience, in things indifferent, whether in matters of Government, or Worship, or Discipline: keeping still to the Analogy of Faith and sound Doctrine, and to the Rule of God's Word.

And hereupon it was, that the *English Church*, when it threw off the tyrannous yoke of *Poperie*, as it did with prudent Zeal, and by publick Authority, reform the abuses and corruptions of *Doctrine*, and abolish all superstitious and idle Ceremonies; so of them what were found not contrary to *Scripture-rule*, and agreeable to *Primitive practice*, it thought fit to retain, for decency and good order, in her *Liturgy* and *Publick Service*.

And though some were even then discontented, that no more was done; and called for a farther Reformation: yet this was but according to the *British Proverb*, which tells us, that *the Saisons* (so they call us) *never know when a thing is well*; but will be mending still, till they mar all: as our late times plainly shew; when, under pretence of reforming Religion, we had put our selves into the ready way of losing it quite, and had scarce the face of a Church left amongst us.

Upon this ground Calvin himself (as judicious Mr. Hooker tell us) erected his Model at Geneva, applying himself to the exigents of that time, and those people, he had to do with: though others since, besides his first intention, have, with violent zeal, endeavoured to impose that Form upon other Churches also, as matter of *Conscience*; which was designed by him meerly out of *prudence* and *convenience*.

And no question, but Calvin might look upon Government, (though he had for his own part as much Authority as ever Bishop of Geneva had; and *Presbytery* it self is little else then a multiplied *Episcopacy*, setting up in every Parish a *Diocesan*) I say, he might probably look upon Church-government as an indifferent thing, as well as he did upon the *Lord's day* it self, which he was about (as Martin Bucer reports of him) to have changed from *Sunday* to *Thursday*, for the convenience of that people in their marketings.

Again, hereupon it is, from this liberty, whereby the Churches may each order its own affairs in *Christian Polity*, that the Reformed Churches themselves, though agreeing as to the main, in *doctrinals*; yet in other things differ so much among themselves: and yet with that fair regard nevertheless, that, as all the Reformed Churches abroad do highly magnifie the constitution of the Church of England, and approve her Methods; as being the main Rampart and Bulwark against the *Romish Tyranny*; So, on the other hand, the *English Church* is

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very



very far from condemning them, for accommodating themselves to the necessity of their conditions, but embraces them all with a hearty friendship.

And herein, I say, if I mistake not, lies the very *ratio formalis*, the nature and extent of *Christian liberty*, so much talkt of; that the several Churches indeed may, in *externals* and *circumstantials*, square themselves to the necessity of times and places, and order their affairs accordingly.

But to say that every particular *person* or *party*, in the same *Church*, has, by vertue of his Christianity, a liberty to disobey the publick Orders of that *Church*, whereof he is a Member, and to serve God, as shall, notwithstanding those Orders, seem good to that party or person, (for, as the *Party* breaks, it will come to *Persons* at last:) to take *Liberty* (as I said before) in this notion, is to make it but another name for Confusion.

Wherefore, since *Churches* are now constituted, and 'tis clear, they are no more to be under the peoples Government; then the *Civil States* are; but that the ordering of both belongs to the *Christian Magistrate* as the *Guardian* of both *Tables*; I say, since 'tis so, it necessarily follows, that for any man to affirm, that, what the *Magistrate*, upon grave deliberation, requires of us, in God's publick Service, is an intolerable imposition upon conscience; and that things *indifferent*, and in their own nature lawful to be done, being once commanded and recommended by lawful Authority, become *eo nomine*, upon that very account, unlawful; is a most absurd defiance, and not to be endured.

For these are such *Theses*, as, although some have been bold to publish them, and are still confident enough to act according to them; yet have no footing, either in the Word of God, or in right Reason, (upon which two, *Societies* are founded, and the right of *Government* stands) as being destructive at once, not only to the *Peace* of the *Church*, but to the purposes of the *Civil Power* too.

That I may make all clear; I shall, to omit that of *Korah*, the Son of *Levi*, who might possibly otherwise be lookt upon as a *godly* and *able* man, as having a great opinion amongst the *people*, and an interest in many of the *Princes*, and, for ought as we read, was guilty of no other fault but *Nonconformity* and murmuring against *Aaron*, *Numb.* 16. 11. Indeed *Dathan* and *Abiram*, Lay-men, Sons of *Reuben*, went further against *Moses* himself, in *vers.* 13, 14. though these *State-Rebels* too, as well as that disobedient *Levite*, had the luck upon the very morrow after that dreadful execution upon them, to be esteemed at *vers.* 41. by all the Congregation, *the people of the Lord*. Though this look too much like our case; yet, I say, to pass it by, because that was a severe *Example*, I shall give you two milder *Instances*; the one in the Jewish *Church*, long before the building of the Temple, that of *Micah*: the other, of a famous Christian *Church* planted by *St. Paul*, that of the *Corinthians*.

1. The Story of *Micah* is, that he made an *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and consecrated one of his Sons to be his Priest, *Judg.* 17. 5. upon which the Remark is, in the next verse; that *in those days there was no King in Israel; but every man did that which was right in his own eyes*. Nor was the matter mended, when he got a young *Levite* to be his Father and his Priest: for in the very beginning of the next Chapter, 'tis again  
said,

said, *In those days there was no King in Israel*; so that 'tis clear, that this is taxed as a scandal of those loose ungoverned times, when there was *no King*; that any man should set up for himself a private Form of Worship, to which it should seem the people of the neighbour-houses resorted, *chap. 18. verse 22.*

This practice then of *Micah's* was a fault without doubt; which, had there been a *King in Israel*, a lawful Authority in being, to have taken order about such things, would not have been suffered.

2. That of the *Corinthians* is yet more plausible, and yet not faultless neither: they kept to their publick *Ministers*; yet, because they prefer'd one to another, and some liked better of *Paul's* performance, others of *Apollos*, in the same common work; he taxes them of carnality, *i. e.* of *Schism*. *1 Cor. 3. 3.* for so he gives the reason; *For, saith he, whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions or factions, are not ye carnal? why? what factions or divisions are these he speaks of? he tells you, verse 4. For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? and yet Paul and Apollos were excellent Persons both of them; not only Orthodox sound men, but men of eminent abilities both, and extraordinary graces. But Paul and Apollos were but Ministers, as he tells us in the next verse, that employed those gifts, and exercised those graces for the Churches good, as the Lord giveth to every one.*

If this be *envying*, and *strife*, and *division* or *faction*, what would *Paul* have said of us? how *carnal* are we, who do not gad after the *Pauls* and *Apollos*? I wish they were, for their own and their Hearers sakes, all such, whom people now-a-days so eagerly follow; but quite Kim-kam leave the regular Assemblies of *Orthodox* men, and run a wild-riding after every *Will-in-the-wisp*, that comes in our way, and have such persons in admiration, as are, many of them, neither *Orthodox* nor *able*; and further, some of us take up dangerous *Principles* at any rate, and exercise *Religions* of our own making, in such a manner, as must needs in the end (might such things prevail amongst us) prove destructive to *Christianity* it self.

And thus I have answered that *Objection* at large, taking in the ground of the main Controversie, as far as I could, which is in debate at this day among us. There is *another* too, which I must not let go without its *Answer*, (and I shall be brief)

That these Reasons of mine for *Uniformity* will serve indifferently for all Religions of all Countries, as well as ours; and that *Mahumetans* and *Papists* are, by this Doctrine, no less obliged, then we, to keep up their ways of Worship amongst the people, for the honour of *God*, the reputation of *Religion*, and the safety of the *Government*: since we ought not in stark *Charity* to suppose, but that they, who profess the worst of Religions, do, in their Conscience, and according to their Principles, take it to be the best in the world.

I hope there's no one in this *Assembly*, will make so uncharitable a reflection upon my Discourse, as to imagine, *that* has been the drift of it, to countenance the bloody practices and cruel persecutions, used, either in the *Popes* Dominions, or the *Grand Signior's* Territories. Far be it from me to plead the cause, either of the one or of the other, of the *Eastern* or of the *Western Antichrist*.

Yet I do in my *Conscience* think, that some of those the most violent *Princes* of either Religion, that have been the most zealous *Persecuters*, were in their *Conscience* perswaded, that they were in the right.

You'll say, that's fair for me to grant : Our Saviour says the same : *John 16. 2.* *they shall kill you, and think they do God good service by so doing;* and yet I say Positively, and I would have it taken notice of, because it may concern some, who may think themselves far enough from being in the same form with *Turks* and *Papists*; I do Positively say, that this their acting according to their *Conscience* will by no means excuse them.

For my proof, I have both the great Apostles *Rule* and his *Example* too.

His *Rule* is set down, *Gal. 4. 18.* *It is good to be zealously affected, always in a good thing.* The *Case*, he brings it upon, is not so clear; I suppose upon the account of some false Teachers, which endeavour'd to alienate them from that Doctrine, which he had taught them, and to withdraw them from the Church for their own advantage; and this with a great shew of zeal, in the foregoing verse; *They zealously affect you (says he) but not well: yea, they would exclude you: or, in another reading, they would exclude us, that you might affect them.* I wish our People would beware of such, who with a great deal of zealous affection carry on their own designs.

But whatever the particular case was, the *Rule* will hold in general. 'Tis good to be zealous, if a man's cause be good, and if the man be convinc'd, his cause is so. Otherwise *Zeal* without knowledge, or in a wrong cause, is a ridiculous and mischievous thing; and is upon this score reckoned amongst *the works of the flesh*. And thus is it with those *Idolatrous* People, who, the more zealous they are, the more they have to answer.

I confess 'tis a sad thing, for any man to have an erring guide to follow; I mean an erroneous *Conscience*. For which way soever he take, either *with* or *against* *Conscience*, he is concluded to an unavoidable necessity of sinning; and I must acknowledge too, that 'tis safest to sin on *Conscience* side; and yet the mistake of *Conscience* will not be a sufficient plea for unjustifiable actions.

And thus it was with *Paul*, who, in the time of his *Pharisaism*, was a zealous *Persecutor*, and thought he did well; but after his Conversion, for that very thing condemns himself, as the worst of sinners, and yet was no less zealous for the Religion he turn'd to.

Now, does his *Zeal*, whilst he was a *Pharisee*, which was his great sin, make his *Christian Zeal* e're a whit the less commendable? No sure.

No more does *Nero's* or *Dioclesian's* Persecutions of the *Saints* blemish any *Christian Magistrates* severity, in defending the *Faith* against *Hereticks*, or the *Order* of the Church against *Sectaries*.

*Alexander's* killing of a *Friend* in his drink could be no Argument against his putting a *Traytour* to death by sober advice; nor could the execution of a *Traytor* excuse the murder of a *Friend*.



To retort it upon the *Objectors*: if *they* are so zealously affected, that, rather than their conceits shall not carry, they will venture the pulling down *Church and State* about their ears; let any one judge, is not the *Magistrate*, whom God hath intrusted with the care of his *Church*, obliged to be as *Zealous* for the preservation of *Church and State*, in the vigorous defence of Truth and Peace?

To make a familiar instance: An honest man in possession shews a just courage in maintaining his right, and is commended for it; whilst the injurious *Intruder*, let his courage be what it will, is apprehended and deservedly punish'd by Law, unless he grow too strong for the Law; and then that were such a *Case*, as might indeed be pitied and bewailed on one hand, but cannot on the other hand be justified and maintained, but rather ought on all hands by all possible means to be redrest and amended.

I have done with the *Arguments*, wherein I could not but think it my duty, as to plead the *Churches Peace*, so to vindicate her against some *Objections*, which are usually made; and now shall only desire, that, as you have hitherto attended me with an obliging patience, so you will extend that patience a little farther, whilst I make an earnest and affectionate Address to you, in a short *Application*, with which I shall close all.

Let me then press it upon you, *Right Honourable and Worshipful*, the *Magistrates and Patriots* of this great *City*, and you worthy *Citizens*, of what rank and degree soever, which hear me this day (and I could wish, my voice could reach from one end of the *City* to the other) that you will all of you put on Publick Spirits, and lay to heart the Concerns of your *Brethren and Companions*, and every man in his place exert his Authority and Interest, contribute his Prayers and Endeavours for the Prosperity of the *English Church*, and the compofure of our unnatural irreligious Differences in Religion.

Your *City* is the *Metropolis* of the *Nation*, the *Royal Seat* of the *Government*, and the great *Staple of Trade*; which spreads its universal Influence into all parts of the Land; and your *Example* gives law to all the rest of the People. 'Tis your *Justice*, which holds the ballance in all National dealings; 'tis your *mode of Religion* here, that is follow'd every where; your fashions of serving God, that are taken up and *retayl'd* into the Countrey. The union of this *City* would unite us all.

O do not be wanting to so *Pious*, so *Necessary*, so *Charitable* a Work. If you have any regard to *God's Honour* amongst us, if any care of *Religion*, if any love to your Native *Countrey* and the *Government* you live under; if any kindness to your own *Persons* and *Families*, to your *Wives* and *little ones*, to your *Friends* and *Relations*; if you have any Hopes left, after all those heavy *Judgments* that have gone over you, of enjoying *Peace* and *Liberty* and *Plenty* in your New dwellings; if all these dear *Concerns* do, as I know they needs must, lye near your hearts; act then in the name of God, for his sake and your own, in a full and vigorous sense of these things, and study the *Churches peace*, which is to secure them all to you by your unanimous Agreement in God's *Worship and Service*.

Your

cl. Your publick *Justice*, and *Regulation of Trade*, and *Reformation of Abuses in Civil Affairs*, and the prudent and vigilant Administration of the *Government of the City*, are things make you worthily spoken of: but if this be all, if there be not alike *zeal for God's House*, and the cause of *Religion*, we may say, as he did, *Arcem perdidimus, dum castella defendimus*; We have lost the main Fort of our happiness, the *Churches Peace*; while we take care of the Out-works, of things less considerable.

Pardon me; 'Tis not flattery will uphold a *Government*. I speak it out of hearty affection to my *Countrey*, and a due respect to this famous *City*. My heart bleeds within me, and my bowels earn, to think, in what a posture our *Jerusalem* now stands.

You are very now building in the *Flames*; they have seiz'd your *Suburbs*, and are got within your *Gates*, and are smothering in the midst of your *Ruins*. Let us do, as is usual, when a *Fire* breaks out: every one bring his *Bucket*, and help to quench: unless such a *Stupor* and unactive astonishment hath overtaken us, as did in the late *Conflagration*, and we tamely give up all to the *Fury of the Merciless Element*.

And this sure is the far more deplorable *Fire* of the two, as laying waste the *Consciences of men*, and burning up our main *Strengths* and greatest *Ornaments*, and laying us open to dismal *Expectations*.

I pray read the 28. of *Deuteronomy*, and apply it to our Case; that if they did not observe the *Commandments and Statutes God appointed them to walk in*, (by which was not meant the *Moral Law* alone, for that has an equal obligation upon all *Mankind*; but those *National Rules and Institutions*, by which they were made a *People* and a *Church*) they should be *cursed in the City, and cursed in the Field*; they should build *Houses*, and not dwell in them; they shall be *pursu'd with Plagues*, and at last given up to the insolence of *Foreigners*, and pluck'd off from the *Land of their Nativity*.

What then can we look for at last, after so many *Methods*, God has lost upon us, after so many *Preludia* of his displeasure, but some determining exterminating Judgment? But God forbid! I have some hopes still of God's mercy to this our *Jerusalem*, and his pity to her, as she lies in her dust.

Nor is the thing it self, I am perswaded, past remedy, were it apply'd to, and we would take Saint *Jude's* advice, *Jude 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 verses*, where he tells us of those, that *separate themselves*; that, for all their pretences, *have not the Spirit*. But ye Beloved, (says he) *building up your selves on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghost*, (which may most certainly be done in the publick wholesome forms of *Church-Devotion*) *Keep your selves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life*. And of some have *compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear*, his meaning is, by rugged means; *pulling out of the Fire*. This *Schism* then and *Separation* is a *Fire*, in the *Apostles Language*; and some are to be *pull'd out of it by force*. The *Ingenuous* will be sham'd, the *Meek* will be convinc'd, the *Considering* will be reason'd out of it; but some there are, it seems, must be roughly dealt with, and aw'd by *Authority*. Let us, like *Brethren and Companions*, take up the business between our selves.

Come ; we are *Men*. 'Tis the Priviledge of the blessed *Angels* to be free from errour ; but the Infirmary of *Humane* nature to commit mistakes, to persist in errors though, even to publick mischief, is the character of the *Devil's* Pride and Malice ; but to return and repent, is the glory of the *Saints* of God. Why should any one of us be ashamed of that which is his Glory, and will be his eternal Comfort ?

We are *Brethren and Friends* ; we live under the same Laws, and profess the same *Gospel of Peace* ; why should we disagree, and fall out in our greatest Concern, and quarrel one another into common Ruin ? *Jerusalem* is the mother of us all ; let not us by our Divisions Gal. 4.26. make her a *Samaria*, a Seminary of *Sects and Factions* : let us not make our *Mother* a Harlot. What have we to do with the Statutes of *Omri* and *Abab*, and the sin of usurping *Jeroboam*, which he caused *Israel* to sin ? They are dead and gone, and let their *Statutes* die with them.

You are *Citizens of London*, a People of great Credit and Reputation all the World over, for your Prudence and good Government, for your vast Trade and Dealings ; and you are allied to most of the considerable Families of the Kingdom : let it not be said of you, that you are grown weak and mean, a fluttering and unsteady People ; that you have quit your Establishments, and are perpetually to seek for your *Religion*, and are ready, like Children in your streets, to be caught up by every Spirit, and to run after every one that pretends to be a Guide.

*London*, an Ancient and Noble *Mart*, long talkt of in the world, before ever there was *Dam* or *Dike* in *Holland* ; let it not truckle under *Amsterdam* ; and be made a Magazine of Opinions, and new fangled *Religions*. O ! do not *You* for shame seem to justifie that advantage the Enemies of our *Church* have taken from 666. to clap the name of *Babylon* upon our *City* ; but wipe off the reproach, and fling it back into the face of them, as they deserve it ; by uniting all, as one man, in the service and worship of God, and in the common defence of the *Protestant* cause.

And then, when you are thus agreed, when your Minds are as *Uniform* as your Buildings are like to be ; then shall ye be blessed in the *City*, and blessed shall ye be in the *Field* ; blessed shall be your Basket and your Store : then the Lord shall establish you a holy people unto himself ; and all people shall see, that ye are call'd by his name, and they shall be afraid of you. Then the Lord shall open unto you his good treasure, and shall make you plenteous in goods ; and he shall command the blessing upon you, in your Store-houses, and in all that you set your hands unto. Deut. 28.3, 5, 9, 10.

And then, when your *Example* has prevail'd with the rest of the *Nation* ( as it will in a very short time ) that having our hearts united in God's fear, and laying aside all animosities and unnecessary quarrels, we may serve him with one heart and with one shoulder, and with one voice confess his holy name and his word ; and, being like-minded, we may unanimously seek those things which tend to publick Peace, and to the good of Community ; Then, when we are thus United, all other Disorders will easily be regulated, all Grievances redrest, and all Scandals remov'd, to the honour of the Government, and the welfare of the People ; Then shall the Earth bring forth her increase, and God, even our own God, shall give us his blessing: Zeph. 3.9. Psal. 67.6.

Then



Isa. 60. 17.

Psal. 5. 12.

Then shall we see both *Church* and *State* once more in a flourishing condition ; when God shall make all our Officers righteousness, and with his favour shall encompass us, as with a shield : Then shall this *floating Island* be settled upon sure and lasting grounds ; Then shall *Albion* again be the Praise and Terrour of the Nations, nor shall her white Cliffs, or her wooden Walls, or the Embraces of her beloved *Ocean*, so much secure her, as the *Divine* Protection, and Agreement of her *Inhabitants*.

Which may a good God in his good time, of his infinite Mercy, grant, for his *Churches*, and for our *Brethren and Companions* sakes. Amen, Amen.

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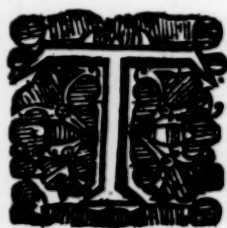
*An*

*SAMUEL in Circuit, An Assize-Sermon,*

Preached at the Assizes held at *Alesbury* for the  
County of *Bucks*, *Joseph Alston* Esquire,  
then High-Sheriff, *March 8.* being *Ash-*  
*Wednesday, 167<sup>o</sup>.*

1 Sam. VII. xv, xvi.

*And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life.  
And he went from year to year in Circuit to Beth-el,  
and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all  
those places.*



THE very notion of *Judging* implies a *Law*; there being such a mutual connexion and relation betwixt the *Judge* and the *Law*, that they infer one another, and the denial of one takes away the other also. No *Law*, no *Judge*: No *Judge*, no *Law*. For how shall *Samuel* judge, if he have not a *Rule* laid before him, according to which *Judgment* is to be made? and that *Rule* is the *Law*. And on the other

side, to what purpose serves the *Law*, if there be not some *Person* authorized, who may interpret that *Law*, and apply it to particular *Cases*, and see it put in due and orderly *Execution*? and that *Person* is the *Judge*. If then there be a *Judge*, it follows that there is a *Law* also; by which, as he is *impowered*, so he is to be *directed*. We have a *Reverend Judge* before us in the *Text*, on the *Seat*. It will be necessary then, in order to their acting, to open their *Commission* first (as is usual) and to shew the *Law*, by *Authority* whereof *Samuel* and all his fellow-Judges are to *Act*.

*Law* is as connatural to *Man*, as his *Reason* is. For what is *Reason* it self, but a *Law* and *Rule* of mens actions? This is that which constitutes and denominates us *Men*. For he that doth not govern himself according to the prescript of right *Reason*, lives not the life of *Man*; and consequently doth both transgress the *Law*, and forfeit the *Priviledge* of his *Creation*; either by sensuality and lust degrading himself into *Beast*, or by envy and malice and spiritual wickedness transforming himself into *Devil*.

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Hence,

Rom. 2. 15.

Cic.

Tit. 2. 12.

Math. 7. 12.

Hence, out of the source of *Reason*, flows the Law of Nature, *Jus non scriptum*, the unwritten Law, or rather, as the *Apostle* terms it, the Law written in every Mans heart: his conscience bearing witness, and his thoughts accusing, or excusing him, in every thing he does, according as he in his actions thwarts or complies with this Law. This is that the great *Orator* speaks of, *Lex non posita, sed insita; non imperata, sed innata*: a Law not speaking to us from without; but implanted in the mind of Man, and interwoven in his very constitution.

To this Law belong all those common Notions, by which we are taught to acknowledge the Existence of God, and to distinguish what is *Honest*, and *Just*, and *Becoming* the Nature of Man (whether Alone or in Society) and what is otherwise. And by this very Law we are instructed to order our behaviour, as Men, in a fair decorum, piously towards God, soberly towards our selves, and justly, and modestly, and charitably too towards other men; for even *charity* it self is an act of justice (so the Hebrew terms it צדקה *Righteousness*) at least the doing that to others, as the *Royal Law* bids us do, which, were we in their condition, we would have done to our selves.

To these Heads of *Piety* to God and *Justice* to Men, a learned *Rabbin*, in his discourse with the King of *Cozar*, reduces all the *Laws* of Nature; grounding them upon those two places of Scripture, *Deut. 10. 12. What does the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear him, and to love him, and to serve him?* and *Mic. 6. 8. What doth the Lord require of thee, O Man, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* And the same *Author* further tells us, that these חוקים השכליים *Statuta Intellectualia*; (so he calls them, as things which natural Reason, and humane Understanding of it self, without any prompting, judges fit to be observed) I say these *Laws* of Nature are necessarily pre-required, as preparatory exercises to the knowledge and performance of the *Divine Law*; as things, without which no Society can subsist: insomuch that *Rebels* and *Thieves*, though they be *Unjust* to others, yet are forced upon this principle to practice a kind of Justice amongst themselves, that they may keep their party together upon fair and equitable terms.

This is the Law of Nature then; and truly would we live up to the direction of That, we should not need any other Law. But upon the fall of man Nature it self being universally (as it was) corrupted as well as weakned, and the Notions of *Original Righteousness*, through prevailing wickedness, which has increased all along proportionably with mankind it self, being in a manner wholly defaced and obliterated; it was necessary that Law should be recovered, and re-imprinted upon the memory of men, that even vulgar understandings should have their duties plainly laid out before them: and this to be done by *Positive Laws*; which being founded, as near as might be, upon those of Nature, as being the productions of reason and convenience together, might accommodate general Rules to particular Instances, according to Circumstances of time and place, and the Exigencies of the state of things for the security of Government, and the safety of the People to be governed.

This God himself provided for in the *Israelitish* Common-wealth; by prescribing them Rules not only for their *Moral* behaviour; (for these were of perpetual universal obligation to all mankind; and this was that Law written in the heart, before it was engraven upon stone) but for their *Civil* affairs also, and even to the very Ceremonies in his publick worship.

The



The first of these, namely, the *Moral Law*, as I said, obligeth all men whatsoever, and no less, if not more, now, since *Christ* is come, then before: but as to the two latter, the *Judicial* and the *Ceremonial Laws*, God has left particular *States* and *Churches* to the liberty of their own determinations, so to order both *Political* and *Ecclesiastical* Jurisdiction, as may be most expedient; provided they command nothing contrary to that Law, which he himself hath given us; I mean, the *Moral Law*.

To give two or three *Instances*.

*Theft* is forbidden in the *eighth precept*, and by the *Judicial Law* was to be punished (amongst the *Jews*) only with a *fourfold restitution* of the thing stoln, in kind, or of the value of it. But in most *Christian States*, upon trial, or possibly mistrust, that that punishment would not prove a sufficient restraint; the penalty is altered, and the *Thief* dies for it: nor is any allowed to claim the benefit of the *Judicial Law*, when he breaks the *Moral*, but is justly sentenced by the Law of his own *Country*; that Law having been made only for the *Jews*, and every Nation now being to be governed by Laws of its own.

Again, for the *Church*. The *seventh day* from the Creation, which is commanded in the *fourth precept* to be kept holy, was a thing *Ceremonial*; but the keeping of *one day in seven* or some such proportion of time, was perhaps a *Moral duty*. The *Christian Church* therefore has both laid aside the *Ceremony*, and preserved the *Morality*, by changing the day.

On the other hand, the *Worship* of God is a duty the very Law of Nature requires of men in Society: Now for *Forms* and *Habits*, and the *Ceremonies* of Worship, (since God cannot be worshipt otherwise, I mean, without some Form and Ceremony or other) these are to be ordered by the *Churches* appointment; and every Member of that Church (I speak of a *National Church*) is obliged, unless he can be sure such appointments are against God's Law, to obey and comply with her Orders.

But, what some say, that in *Civil* concerns indeed we are tied up to the Laws; but in *Church* affairs we are left to our own choice and liberty; is no more vain and frivolous, than 'tis absurd and irrational. For a man may upon as good reason demand to fashion the *Laws* to his own mind, by which he means to live; as to shape his *Religion* to his own Fancy and Interest: since he is alike accountable to the Government for both, and *separations* in *Church* may prove of as dangerous a consequence to the Publick, as *divisions* in *State*. For he that has made himself his own God, ('tis an expression of a late Author against *Atheism*) will by his good will be his own King too. And it may very well be suspected, that those who grumble at *Church-Orders*, would not, if they could help it, be very well satisfied with the *Civil Laws* neither, they both having their Rise from the same Authority.

At this pass were things in *Israel*, when every man did that which was right in his own eyes, and then 'tis said they did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. And so it was always, when there was no King in *Israel*; Wherefore to prevent such disorders, and to deliver them from those distresses, their disorders brought upon them, God often raised them up Judges, the last whereof was *Samuel* here, a Priest, and a Judge.

Judg. 17. 6

Judg. 13. 1

*And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life, &c.*

In which words consider we Him,

1. In his *Station or Residence*, as a *Judge* upon the *Bench*: he judged Israel *all the days of his life*; and that at *Ramah*, where his house was, as it follows, *v. 17.*

2. In his *Journey and Circuit*, as a *Justice* in *Eyre*: he went from year to year in *Circuit* to *Beth-el* and *Gilgal*, &c.

Thus like the standing and moving foot of a pair of *Compasses*; his *fixed* and *settled* judicature was at *Ramah*, and the *occasional* exercise of it from year to year at other places also.

As to this constant *Residence*, wherein *four* things are to be taken notice of:

1. His Person; *Samuel.*
2. His Office; *to judge Israel.*
3. His Patent; *all the days of his life.*
4. His Seat, out of the next verse, *Ramah.*

I. First for the *character* and qualification of the *Person*. *Samuel* was *Prophet* and *Priest*, as well as *Judge*; *Right Reverend* in all his *capacities*, in all his *functions*: Nor was it any objection against him from the people, that he was a *Church-man*, and so unfit to serve his Country in a secular charge. Nor was it to him any scruple of Conscience within his own breast, that he intangled himself with *civil* affairs, or took upon him more *Employments*, then one man could well go thorough. 'Tis true, he was devoted by his Mother in his long coats to the Churches service; *I have lent him*, says she, *to the Lord, as long as he lives*, *Chap. 1. verse 28.* and accordingly he, after *Eli's* death, succeeded him in the *Priesthood*. Again *all Israel* (the Text tell us) *from Dan even to Bersheba* knew, that *Samuel* was *established* to be a *Prophet of the Lord*, *Chap. 3. verse 20.* And not only so; a *Prophet* himself, but a trainer up of young *Prophets*, the *President* of a Colledge at *Naioth* in *Ramah*, *Chap. 19. verse 20.* And here 'tis said he judged Israel *all the days of his life.*

These were three such *Impleys*, as for the *attendance* they required, could not well be managed by one Person; as for the *consequence* and high concernment of them, ought not in prudence, one would think, be intrusted with any one. Yet this consideration was so far, from either *disadvantaging* the publick, or *disparaging* any of those places, or *discouraging* the person that undertook them, that his Government brought great blessings to the People, and honour to Himself, and glory to God. For such was his *Sanctity* and *Wisdom*, such his *Ability* of *Judgment* and *Integrity of Life*, such his *Prudence* and *Conduct*, such his constant *Piety* to God, and affectionate *Zeal* for publick good, such his *Favour* with God and his *Reputation* with the People; that in all *Israel* no three men could have been met with, singly qualified for any of those three *Trusts*, as he alone was for all three.

Nor did it make a little for the *Peace* and *Unity* and good *Order* of the *Common-wealth*, that the same Person was *Supream Governor*, both in *Church* and *State*; which else in some cases might clash, and give advantage to a factious people, one against the other.

Nor

Nor it seems was this the first time, that both *Powers* thus met in one *Person*: for *Eli*, who was his immediate Predecessor in the Priesthood, had been *Judge* forty years before; nor is it unlikely, that this *civil Office* might, together with the  *sacred function*, be devolved upon him by succession, as he was *Priest*; the *Jewish Writers* telling us, it was not unusual, that in later times the *High Priest*, if he were reputed a *Wise* and a *Good* man, was chosen into the *Sanhedrim*, and made the *Nasi*, which is as much as with us the *Lord President* of the *Supream Court*; and in former times we find in Scriptural Language, that the same word *Cohen* signified both *Priest* and *Prince*.

Gen. 41. 45.

Nor was it for nothing, that at first, before *Aaron's* Family was settled, the *Priesthood* went constantly along with the *Primogeniture*; whereupon *Eli* is branded for *profane*, because he so slightly parted with his Birthright.

Hebr. 12. 15.

Afterwards indeed *Moses* and *Aaron*, being *Brothers*, did by Divine appointment divide the *Powers*; the one managing the *Sword*, the other the *Keys*. Nor do we meet with any Instance, where they were joyned again, till *Eli* and *Samuel*, who were *Priests* and *Judges* too.

But as These, being *Priests*, had the *Supremacy* in *State* also; so from *David* downwards, the *Kings* were *Supream Moderators* in the *Church*; as appears by *David's* and *Solomon's* Institutions, and by the Reformations of *Josiah*, *Hezekiah*, and the like.

And this, though it may not look altogether so pertinent to this time and place, has howsoever this useful remark, that the *Civil Magistrate* ought not to think himself unconcerned in the Interests of the *Church*; and that, since *Priests* have formerly done the office of *Judges*, *Judges* on the other hand may think it to be some obligation upon them to take care, as opportunity shall offer, of the *Priest*: that so *Church* and *State*, whose Interests have sometimes so fairly met, and kindly inbraced one the other, being lodged in one and the same bosom; may ever, though asunder, and intrusted into different hands, yet lovingly agree, and be friendly and helpful one to the other.

II. From the *Person* we come to treat of the *Office*, that he was the *Judge of Israel*: and of that

1. In its *Nature*.
2. In its *Power*.
3. In its *Extent*.
4. And lastly in its *Rule*.

I. First for the *nature* of it: As there can be no *Judge* without a *Law*, to authorize and direct him; for without that it may be said to him, as it was to *Moses*, before he had his Commission; *Who made thee a Prince and a Judge over us?* and our *Saviour* himself, when addressed to for dividing the Inheritance, asks the same question, though otherwise in all points qualified for the office; *Who made me a Judge?* So on the other hand, without a *Judge*, *Law* it self would be of no use: For how would *Laws* be executed, or publick Order be preserved?

Exod. 2. 14.

Luke 12. 14.

Wherefore as the *God of nature* has provided *Laws*, whereby men are to be governed; so he has not been wanting to invest some men, in all places and at all times, with *authority*, to secure those *Laws*, and to punish the violations of them.

He



He himself is the *supream Judge*. Next under him, in every man's own breast, his own *Conscience*, as God's Deputy, exercises sovereign *Rule*, calling him to the *Bar*, and arraigning him, and either acquitting or condemning him; to which end that *Faculty* is furnished with a kind of *Omniscience* (which no Judge from without has, that can but judge *Secundum allegata & probata*) she, I say, is conscious to all a man's thoughts as well as actions, alledges and proves all he has done or said, or so much as design'd; and, as God himself will, not only sits upon a man as his *Judge*, but stands out against him too, as a *Witness*.

But this inward *Reflexive Judgment* of the Soul of Man upon it self, this *Home-Circuit*, is not enough to do the business of *Society*.

In this our corrupt State, wicked men have partly found out ways to bribe, to corrupt and debauch this *Judge* within them; partly have arrived to that impudence and insensibility in sinning, that they have hardned themselves against the *sentence*, as well as against the *dictates* of *conscience*, and in the pursuit of what pleaseth a vicious *appetite*, and a depraved *will*, neither regard the one nor the other; having by bold and frequent attempts upon conscience worn out all that *Awe*, which naturally every man owes to himself.

The Case of the generality of men standing thus, it was necessary, that for external *polity*, whereby men are joyned together in *society*, God should depute other *Judges*, besides *Conscience*, (since it would have been so dangerous to have left men barely to that) who might take care, *nè quid Resp. detrimenti capiat*, to prevent mischiefs, that might befall *Community* from disorderly persons, by restraining at least the outward actions of men, and bringing them to account for them. And this he has ever done.

Let us a little trace it to the *Original*.

This *Judiciary power* then was at the first founded by God in *pater-nal authority*; the Father of the Family having then *jus vitæ & necis*, power of life and death, and of dispensing other punishments upon those of his own family, according to their demerits: as the examples of *Abraham* turning out of his son *Ishmael*; of *Noah* cursing *Cham*; and of *Judah* sentencing his Daughter-in-law to be burnt, &c. do shew.

One evident footstep of this *parental power* appears, even in the *Judicial Law*, in the case of the *Rebellious Son*, who was to dye with his Fathers hand upon him first.

So that, even upon this account, every man, that comes into the world, is born under a *natural subjection*.

Now when Mankind was multiplied, and men were to be united into larger *societies* and *greater bodies*; then all the *Families* of the Kindred were to be gathered and consolidated under some one Head, the *Patriarch* or chief Father of all the several *Families*.

And this Power by lineal descent fell to the *eldest Sons*; so that the *first-born* were by prerogative of their birth, *Kings* and *Priests*; unless there happen'd a forfeiture, as it was with *Esau* and *Reuben*, who were therefore justly put by.

After-

Afterward, when *Kindreds* themselves, what with the propagation of their own Families, what with the commixtion of strangers, were so enlarged, that they became *Nations*; then the Government was intrusted with *Kings*, as God's Vicegerents.

For, though there be other *Forms*, which I shall not now dispute against, yet the *Monarchical* has this advantage at least over them all, that it was the first, and far the most ancient of them all; as the Historian *Justin* has observed, that *principio rerum*, at the beginning of the world, *that is*, when the world was first divided into *Nations*, it was governed by *Kings*.

This among all other People; but then God having a special care of His own people, did not at first set up *Kingly* Government amongst them, (though afterwards upon their desire he did) but to maintain the *Theocracy*, his own Government among them, did, upon occasion of great troubles or imminent dangers, raise them up *Judges*, who were tantamount to *Kings*. Nay; *Moses* himself gives himself the very Title too; *Deut.* 33. 5. where he says, that *Moses was King in Jesurun*, when the Heads of the People and the Tribes of Israel were gathered together. And thus *Sufetes*, (which is the word for *Judge* with the *Phanicians* and *Carthaginians* their descendents, as well as with the *Hebrews*,) is used by *Seneca* and others, that speak of those people, for the *Supream Magistrate*.

2. And such was *Samuel's* power here, as that of all the other *Judges* before him; differing from the *Kingly* rather in name than substance, as to the exercise of it.

Some tell us, it was much-what like that of the *Dictators* at *Rome*, in that they were raised only upon extraordinary occasions, and intrusted with an arbitrary power.

'Tis true, as the occasion was extraordinary, so 'twas fit their power too in some measure should be such.

But then these *Judges* of ours differed from them in this, that these had extraordinary assistances from God; not to say, that these having taken upon them once the Government, some of them, as *Eli*, *Samuel*, &c. never laid it down again, nor returned back to their private condition, as they all did, but *Julius Caesar*.

By this power then they were instated in a *supremacy*, and were *absolutissimi* unlimited, unaccountable and unappealable. They had the universal dispensation of *Justice*, an absolute right to make War and Peace, command of mens persons and fortunes, and power of *Life* and *Death*. And all other *Magistrates* and *Officers* derived their authority from them.

It is the opinion of some, and those learned, that the great Council of *Seventy*, which *Moses* by God's appointment set up for his assistance, to help him in the tryal of lesser causes, usually called the *Sanhedrim*, or *Sanhedrin*, the *Jewish Parliament*, continued down from *Moses* without any interruption till *Herod's* time; if so, then the *Judge* was chief over them. Numb. 11. 16.

Besides, there were lesser Courts too in each City, much like our *Hundred-Courts*, and *Courts-Leet*, to judge of smaller matters; who, as they received their authority from the *Supream Court*, so might be appealed from to it. And all these inferiour Courts subordinate to the great *Constitution*, and that it self to the *Judge*.

But I rather incline to *Grotius*, who thinks that in these times all the bands of Government were loosened amidst the popular licentiousness, when every one did what they list; and that there were no Courts at all kept to call them to account; but that God raised these Judges on purpose, as well to recall the people to good order, as to deliver them from the oppression of their enemies: since the History makes it clearly out, that, at every vacancy or interval of Government, the people fell off afresh into their former disorders, and those disorders brought new troubles upon them, which both occasioned the raising of a new Judge, to rescue them from one and t'other, from their sins, and from their foes. For so we find Judge *Samuel* in this very Chapter first call them together to *Mizpeh* for a Fast and Humiliation, before he venture them to Battel against the *Philistines*.

However it were, these Judges had not their power from the People, (though sometimes the peoples consent and desire too was not wanting;) but immediately from God himself. And so is it proportionably with all supream Magistrates.

For that *Ascham's* position is not true, that they receive their power by compact and agreement of the People, this one Argument amongst many, is enough to evince; that *No man* in the world has power over his own Life; and consequently cannot transfer that power to another, which he has not himself. Nor has the whole Community together that power, since the particular Persons, which make up the Community, have no such power, and the whole cannot have more in it, then the parts had to contribute to it.

The Judicatory power then is not derived from the people, but from God himself transmitted to the King as supream, and from him to the Judges, as Ministers of Justice sent by him: the King being; the fountain of Justice, and the Soul and Life of the Law.

3. And this to the whole Body and every Part of it, in all its Concerns; which is the Extent of this power.

First over all Persons: for so 'tis said of *Samuel*, that he gathered all *Israel* to *Mizpeh*, and there judged them.

1 Tim. 1.9.  
Gal. 5.23.

Rom. 3. 31.

The Church of *Rome* indeed priviledgeth her Priests from the Civil Judicature; and there are Others, though seemingly of far different perswasion, that would fain have it believed, they are not concerned in Law, or consequently in Government, upon that assertion of the Apostles, that the Law is not made for the righteous; and in another place, where he speaks of meekness, temperance, &c. that against such there is no Law: and I agree to them, that if they do well, as the same Apostle says, Rom. 13. they need not fear; but that upon this condition then, *ea Lege*, if they observe the Law. For what says the Apostle elsewhere? Do we then by faith, (and I may say, do we then by our good works) make void the Law? yea, rather we establish it, by performing what it commands.

Further, Innocence it self may be impleaded, and so fall under the Inquisition of the Law; and 'tis the Evidence must fetch her off. The Law then is for clearing, and acquitting the guiltless, no less then for condemning criminals. As at a Goal-delivery, the *Billa vera* casts the Prisoner, the non-evidence of the fact sets him free.



Again, as this *Judicial power* is over all *Persons*, so 'tis in all *Causes*, Temporal by the *Judge*, Spiritual by the *Bishop*, by each as the *King's* Delegate.

And *Samuel* acted in both these capacities here; so that he had the People upon a double account obliged to him, for the punishment of crimes, and the decision of *controversies* in both Courts, *Civil*, and *Ecclesiastical*; according to the sentence in *Deut.* 17. 12. where having sent them to the *Priest* and the *Judge*, he tells them, that *He that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest, or unto the Judge; that does not stand to their award, and submit to their judgment, even that man should dye.*

Of those, who pretend submission to the *Judge*, but have not the same obedience for the *Priest*, and so would own but half a *Samuel*, we have spoken before, nor shall we need to repeat any thing here.

4. As also we have at large in the very Entrance of the Discourse treated of the *Rule*, to wit, the *Law*; according to which Judgment is to be made; so that we need not much more to say.

The *Law* then, by which the *Judge* is to be regulated, is, in the first place, the *Law of Nature*, which indeed is no other then the *Moral Law*; and to this all Mankind stands obliged and accountable. Whence the *Apostle* tells us, that very Heathens, by the light of Nature, know the judgment of God, that they who do such things, i. e. such as are forbidden by the Law of Nature, are worthy of death. Rom. 1. 32.

Let me only take notice by the way, that there are some, who acknowledge no such thing as a *Law of Nature*; but that these things, we call *Laws*, were invented upon emergent necessities or politick designs, and therefore are only *ex instituto* ὡς κατὰ συνθήκην, by institution and compact; and so are *impositions* rather of the government, or but *compositions* at best, of the Subjects, with the government, then *Laws*.

The *Poets* and some ancient *Philosophers* too, who knew not the Original of mankind, make a pleasant story of it, that men were used at first to fall out and quarrel about their Acorns, and other such provisions, Nature could furnish them with, before the invention of Tillage; and with fists first, and then with clubs, disputed their rights; till at last the strongest, to be sure, got the better: but then he that was strongest to day, by ill hap, many times, meeting with one stronger then he on the morrow, was forced to resign the booty of his last conquest. By this means being tired with these daily Frays, and grown weary of their *Club-Law*; one wiser then the rest perswades them to quietness, and tells them, if they would agree and live civilly together, there would be enough for them all. Whereupon the major part of the weak ones out-voting the strong, who were but few, and would have been apt to fall out among themselves, and could not, if they had held together, have made good their smaller party against a multitude in league; they were all content: and presently *Articles* were drawn up, and *Laws* made, and *Rules of Society* consented to; by which all mankind has, ever since, time out of mind been governed.

Nor has a late (I am sorry, I cannot call him *Christian*) *Philosopher* mended the matter, but made it much worse: who in his *Leviathan* sets down that for doctrine, which with them pass'd only for fancy, or at best but conjecture. According to this great Master of corrupt reason, every man is free, and has a natural right to every thing, he can make

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himself

himself master of: only men for *fear* of disturbances, and out of care of *self-preservation*, combin'd into *Societies*; or else over-powered by *force*, (for here lies the Argument with him, that the longest *Sword* creates the best *Title*) gave up their *Liberty*, and quitting that *right* they had by *Nature* to all things, submitted to unequal terms for *peace* sake; chusing rather to sit down by the loss, and enjoy a *little* with quietness, then hazard their security by venturing at *all*.

Hence sprang *Propriety*; hence *Rules of Government* and *Politick Constitutions*; which are no longer valid, says that *Author*, then they have *power* to back and justify them.

But if it be so, that *Fear* and *Force* are the principles of *Society*, and the grounds of *Subjection*; then what hinders, but, when a man can shake off that *Force*, or be rid of his own *apprehension*, he may return to his natural *Freedom*, and re-assume his ancient *Rights*?

At this rate *Wives*, *Monies*, *Estates*, all *properties* are exposed as a prey to the bold; and the *Thief*, if his design hit, has a better claim than the *Owner*; and *Rebellion*, *Murder*, *Rapes* and *Rapines*, if attended with success, prove *lawful* actions; and 'tis *miscarriage* only makes them *Crimes*.

And the main reason that *Author* offers against these practices, is, not because they are in themselves *unlawful*, but because they are to the designers *unsafe*. These are impious and dangerous *Tenets*.

Alas! if we hold together upon no better terms than these, where are we? we lye hourly at the mercy of those, that dare be wicked: and what encouragement would this be to wickedness, if men were persuaded once, that, as they grow *prosperous* in villany, they cease to be *wicked*?

But I have shewed before, that there is no such *natural Freedom*, he talks of; and that we are *born Subjects*; and consequently, that natural *Right* he speaks of, is under *restraints* and *limitations*.

'Tis true; God made *Man* a reasonable Creature, and *Lord* of the rest of the Creatures. But how? not so, as that any one man should ingross the whole to himself, and exclude all others, his fellow-men, from a share in that *dominions*. That were not *reasonable* (that where there is an equal *right*, there should not be an equal *share*) and by consequence not sutable to the nature of *Man*. For he that made *Man* *reasonable*, made him *sociable* too.

He was to Marry, to beget Children, to maintain and govern a Family, to provide for those that belonged to him. His *Children* were to be obedient to him, to accept of his provisions, to use their own industry; and, when they came to be Masters of Families themselves, to take the like care of them.

Hence came *Proprieties*, hence *Inheritances*, hence *Purchases*, hence *Trades*, *Callings*, *Professions*, and other honest courses for getting a livelihood.

Thus, we see, our first *Parent* bred up his Children, the one to be a *Husbandman*, the other to be a *Shepherd*; Intimating, that every one is by *Nature* to live by his own *labour*, and not by invading anothers *right*.

These are the great purposes of *Society*; and all this agreeable to *Nature*, whose grand Maxim 'tis, *To do as we would be done by*.

There

There is then a *Meum & Tuum* founded in Nature.

There are such things as *Vertue, Honesty, Equity, Industry, Justice*, and the like, to be practised amongst men, even by the *Law of Nature*: and they are to be looked upon as *Hostes Humani generis*, Enemies to *Society*, Enemies to *Nature*, that would perswade the world to the contrary.

But there are, I said, besides This of *Nature*, other *Positive Laws*, which oblige the *external actions* of men, and by which men are to be judged; and those both *Political* and *Ecclesiastical*, in the making of which, particular *Commonwealths* and *Churches* are left by Divine Wisdom to their own *Liberty*: God himself having provided nothing in that kind for us; only left us, a *Model* of his own Government amongst his own people, in the *Jewish State* and *Church*; to wit, the *Judicial* and *Ceremonial Law*.

As to *Church* affairs; though those *Ceremonies*, being only *Types* and *Shadows* of *Christ*, had their end and completion at his coming, and so we are obliged against them; yet, seeing God cannot be worshipped without some *ceremony*, 'tis not to be imagined, that publick *Authority* should want *power* for the ordering of *Externals* in the *worship* of God.

But as to matters of *Politie*, that frame of Government, which God with his own hand set up, deserves our *veneration* sure; and *Calvin* further acknowledges, that many of those *Rules* and *Methods* may by any *Christian State* be safely *imitated*, and fairly *transcribed* into practice.

I shall not here start that *question*, which Sir *Thomas Moor*, once *Chancellour* of *England*, and the Ornament of his *Country*, in his *Utopia* doth, why we punish *Theft* with death, and not as the *Judicial Law* prescribes; because I have already answered it, and the late success has justified the severity.

Only having spoken so much of the *Law of Nature*, let me add one word (I beg the *Lawyers* pardon, if I speak in *alieno foro*) concerning our *Municipal* or *Common Law*; (neither *Law* nor *Prayer* is e're a whit the worse for being *Common*;) that there is not any *Law* extant, either in *Books* or *Practice*, which comes so near the *Jus naturale*, as *Ours* does; being a kind of unwritten *Law*, grounded upon *Custom*, and built up by long *Experience* of its *Usefulness* and *Convenience*, having been, long before the *Conquerours* time, (who only put it into a *French* dress and livery, as a *cognizance* of his conquest) practised here, among the *Saxons*, and, as 'tis more then probable among the ancient *Britans* too, whose *Druids*, as they were learned men, so were able *Lawyers*, yet would never commit any thing to writing.

I have done with the *Office*: a word or two of his *Patent* and *Residence*.

III. His *Patent* was signed for him *durante vita*; he was a Judge *all the days of his life*: nor was his *Judiciary* power extinguished or superseded by the superinduction of the *Regal*; as may appear by his giving *Orders* to *Saul*, and his calling him to account for his neglect, and his hewing *Agag* in *Gilgal*; so that *Saul*, one might think, were, till *Samuel's* death, only the *General, administer belli*, to execute the orders of War.



Acts 13. 20.

Yet Saint *Paul* having said, that God had given the Jews *Judges* for about the space of 450 years, until *Samuel* the Prophet; adds, that then he gave them King *Saul* 40 years; in which account he includes *Samuel's* time too. Wherefore some thus explain it, *all the days of his life*; to wit, from *Eli's* death, till *Saul's* being made King.

One of the *Rabbins* asks how this could be, how he cou'd be Judge *all the days of his life*; and answers himself (as that sort of people are full of fancy and confidence) that *Samuel*, while he was *בסעי אמו* in his mothers belly, was made a Judge, and chosen into the *Sanhedrim*.

However, He was the last of this Order of the *Judges*, and the power expired with him; his Sons having been as faulty in *State*, as *Eli's* had been in the *Church*, as corrupt *Judges*, as they were scandalous *Priests*: wherefore, as the lewdness of *Hophni* and *Phineas* turned old *Eli's* Family out of the *Priesthood*, so *Samuel's* Sons by their misdemeanours, outed themselves out of the *Civil Government*.

IV. *Lastly*, His constant *Residence* was *Ramah*, a City of *Benjamin*, where his House was, and where his Father and Mother had dwelt before.

Here he built an *Altar* for publick worship; which the *Jewish Masters* tell us, was lawful even for any private man to do at that time, when the *Tabernacle* at *Shiloh* was pulled down, and destroyed after the taking of the *Ark*.

Once we read, that, when *David* came to him from Court, they went and dwelt together at *Naioth*, which was hard by; I suppose, for more privacy in his Colledge there. And here at last he laid his bones.

*Ramah* was his Dwelling, his Retirement, his Seat of Justice, his Sepulchre.

Hither, as long as he liv'd, all the people of *Israel* came up for Justice; for it was a place of high situation, the name imports. For though there might be *Inferiour Courts* in other Cities, at least *Deputations* elsewhere; yet here was the *supream Court of Appeals*, which afterwards in *David's* time was translated to *Jerusalem*, *Psalms* 122. 4, 5. *Thither the Tribes go up; for there are the Seats of Judgment, seats of the house of David*.

And now 'tis time for me to leave *Ramah*, and set my face towards *Bethel*, and *Gilgal*, and *Mizpeh*; where I must, having so little time left me, make but a short *Circuit*: where first we shall take a View of the *Places*, and then consider the Necessity and Reasons of this *Itinerant Justice*.

I. The *Places* where *Samuel* kept his *Affizes*, were eminent and remarkable in story; large *Shire-Towns*, yet at no great distance neither from one another, lying in as a narrow a compass perhaps as this *County*, we are now in.

Indeed whole *Jewry* was no large piece of ground, being (as I am told by one that undertakes to correct *Adrichomius*) no more then seventy miles long, where 'tis longest, and but eighteen over in breadth; yet very populous it was, because very fruitful.

1. *Beth-el* a \* City of *Benjamin*.

Here *Jacob* saw the vision of the Ladder, † gave it its name, *the House of God*, and set up a Pillar; at his return was || himself here named *Israel*, and built an Altar.

\* Josh. 18. 22.  
בֵּית אֵל  
Domus Dei.  
† Gen. 28. 19.  
|| Gen. 35. 10.

Here the *Ark* of the *Covenant* was, before it was removed to *Shiloh*, and *Phineas*, *Eleazar's* son, stood before it.

Judg. 20. 28.  
Josh. 5. 10.

2. *Gilgal* a City in the plains of *Jericho*, belonging to *Ephraim*.

Here the children of *Israel* were circumcised, having neglected that Sacrament ever since their coming out of *Egypt*; and therefore 'twas called *Gilgal*, because the Lord that day rolled away the reproach of *Egypt* from off them.

Josh. 5. 9.

Here the twelve Stones, after their passage over *Jordan*, were pitched.

Josh. 4. 20.

Here *Samuel* hewed *Agag* in pieces before the Lord, because *Saul* had forborn the execution.

1 Sam. 15. 33.

3. *Mizpeh* a City of *Judah*, in the Valley, as we read *Josh. 15. 38*. but in the 18. 26. 'tis reckoned among the Cities of *Benjamin*, with *Ramah*, and *Bethel*. 'Tis likely it might stand in the confines of both Tribes.

It was, I take it, *Laban's* heap of stones, which he and *Jacob* had raised, and called *Mizpah*; that is, a Beacon or Watch-Tower, saying, *the Lord watch between thee and me*.

Gen. 31. 49.

Here was the *Israelites* constant *Rendezvous*.

Here they encamped against the *Ammonites*, when *Jephtha* was their Leader.

Judg. 11. 11.

Here they all gathered together unto the Lord against the *Benjamites*.

Judg. 20. 1.

Here lastly at the 6. verse of this Chapt. all *Israel* was by *Samuel's* order summoned to appear, and kept a Fast, and powr'd out water before the Lord, that is, tears of repentance, as *Grotius* understands it; and *Samuel* Judged them here, that is, punished them for their iniquities, and offered up a Burnt-offering; and then miraculously the *Philistines* were discomfited.

There were reasons then sufficient, both *Politick* and *Religious*, for *Samuel* to make choice of these places, that were thus *Innobled* and *Consecrated* by such *Famous* and *Sacred* actions, for his seat of Justice; whence the LXX. render it, ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἁγιασμένοις τόποις, in all these holy sanctified places.

And that we may not pass them without some Observation; Our Reverend Judges, though they go not the same Stages with *Samuel*, they go upon the same Designs.

They begin at *Bethel*, the Church, the house of God, where judgment uses, and ought to begin, there to enquire of the Lord.

1 Pet. 4. 17.

They proceed to *Gilgal*, to roll away the reproach of the Countries by punishing Malefactors; and to *Mizpeh*, to inquire into misdemeanours, and see what condition the Publick is in. For so they are styled in Law, *Justitarii deambulantes & perlustrantes*, Justices that take a walk, and make a view of the Countries.

And at this time, I may say, we are most properly met in *Mizpeh*, upon a day appointed by the Church for Humiliation, to pour out our water before the Lord, and to bewail our own sins, and the sins of the Nation, as the *Israelites* did first, and then *Samuel* judged them.

II. As to the Necessity of this *Justice in Circuit*, (though *Samuel's* may be called an *Episcopal Visitation* too, he being the *High-Priest*) it is, that *Justice* may like the *Sun*, the great Minister of Nature, Visit all places, and Influence all parts of the Nation with light, and heat, and vigour: it being as impossible, the Commonwealth should subsist one day without *Justice*, as the lower World be maintained without the *Sun*.

'Tis so here; he rode Circuit *from year to year*: but *Josephus* tells us, (and I know not, whether the *Hebrew* may not well bear that interpretation) that he did it *δις τὸ ἔτος*, twice a year, as Ours do.

The *Causes* of this *Perambulation* I take to be four; two in respect of the *People*, and two in respect of the *Tryals*.

*First*, for the *People*.

1. 'Tis for their *Ease*; that they are not put to the trouble and charge of bringing up their causes to *Ramah*, to the higher Tribunal, the *Kings Bench*; but have them tried *in propriis comitatibus*, in their own Counties.

2. It throws an *Awe* upon the Community, when they see *Justice* brought home to their own doors. *Darius* was wont to complain, his Empire was like a raw Bull-hide, tread it down in one place, it would rise up in another: but where *Justice* is sent into all parts of the Land at the same time, and *Judgment* is alike administred in every District, all is easily kept in order.

Again as to the *Causes* to be tried.

1. *Some* are such, as cannot handsomly be judged, but *upon the place*; for the convenience of *Witnesses*, the circumstances of the *Thing*, and the judgment of the *Voisnage*: as 'tis in the Court of *Nisiprius* for matters of *Fact*.

2. *Others* admit not of delay; as great and horrible offences, to be inquired into and punished, *flagrante crimine*, out of hand. Thus God himself came down to *Babel*, to *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, as it were upon a *Commission of Oyer and Terminer*. And this expedition of *Justice*, and ousting of delays, is given as the main reason of *Itinerant Justice*; *ad celerem justitiam in ea parte exhibendam*.

I come now to *Application*; and let not *Me* do't neither, but let *Samuel* himself: yet not as a *Judge* to give the *Charge* here, but as a *Prophet* and a *Priest*, in humble manner to address himself.

Deut. 1.17.

*First* to my Lord the *Judge*. You are now at *Bethel*, in the house of God; may God direct you. The *Judgment* is *His*. Your *Persons*, your *Functions* are sacred: You your selves in Scripture Language are stiled *Elohim*, Gods. God standeth in the Congregation of the Gods.

Psal. 82.1.

The *Confidence*, the *Law* reposes in you, is as great as the *Trust* she hath disposed to you; and That's no less then the *Lives* and *Fortunes* of all her *Subjects*. *De Fide & Officio Judicis non recipitur Quæstio*, is one of her known *Maxims*. A *Judge* is *viva Lex*, a living *Law*; and ought to be like the *Law*; without *Passion*, without *Partiality*.

1. *Without Passion*. Judgment is an act of Reason. *Passion* serves but to cloud the Reason, and to precipitate the Judgment.

The justice of *Trailbaston* is long since put out of practice for hasty proceeding.



*Augustus*, to check a sudden resolution, was wont to say over the *Greek Alphabet* first, and then resolve.

There is need of deliberation, when mens *fortunes* lie at stake; especially when their *lives* are concerned.

*Nulla unquam de morte hominis sententia longa.*

*Jur.*

2. *Without Partiality.* God is no *respector of persons*: nor is the Judge to accept the face of the *poor*, out of *pitty*; or the face of the *rich*, out of *favour*. A<sup>cts</sup> 10. 34.  
Le v. 19. 15.

The Ballance of *Justice* must have equal scales on both sides, and is to be held with an even hand betwixt both. One Ear is to be given to the *Plaintiff*, and the other to be reserv'd for the *Defendent*. For

*Qui statuit aliquid parte inauditâ alterâ,  
Æquum licet statuerit, haud æquus fuit.*

*Sir. Tr. 45.*

Next to you, the *Worshipful*, the *Justices* and *Gentry* of the Country; who are intrusted with the *Peace*, and one way or other, what by *Authority*, what by *Example*, with the Concerns of the *Government*; that you would make it your business, to encourage and cherish *Moral Honesty* and *Truth* in dealings among the People; and to discover and defeat all knavish and false *practices*, which pervert the purposes of *Government*, and cut the very Sinews and Ligaments of *Society*, (which consists in a mutual confidence) by bringing men into a general *distrust* and *jealousie* of one another.

The Learned *Jew*, I spoke of before, in his Book, called *Cozri*, ingenuously confesses, that it was upon this, that God was so highly displeased with the *Israelites*; that they rested themselves upon their *Religious Services*, their *Oblations* and *Sacrifices*, and other parts and acts of God's Worship; whereas in the mean time they wholly neglected the *Laws of Nature*, and the *Rules of Society*: the neglect whereof does by inevitable consequence tend to the dissolution of the *Communities* of Men; it being a vain pretence, any man makes to *Religion* and the *Worship* of God, who wilfully breaks those *Obligations* and *Ties*, by which he stands bound to *God* and *Man*, upon the very account of *Nature*.

I wish this were well considered by *Those*, who make a great pudder about *Religion*, and yet are not at all scrupulous of *publick danger*: and I heartily pray, that common *Honesty*, and good *Morality*, that *Truth* and *Justice*, and a due *Obedience* to Authority, which are the best and only preservatives of *Kingdom* and *Religion* both, may more vigorously and constantly, more Conscienciously and Universally be practised amongst us. Till this be done, we have but small hopes of seeing either *Church* or *State* in a flourishing condition.

To you the Worthy *Counsellors* and other *Practisers of Law*. You are all in your Spheres under our Reverend *Samuel's*, Ministers of *State* too. Your employment is *Publick*, your Profession *Noble*.

Shall I tell you the end of the *Law*? I need not; I cannot do it better then in the words of a worthy *Author* of your own in a most excellent Preface he has to Chancellor *Ellesmere* before his Book of *Reports*.

*It is, he tells you, to Comfort such as are Grieved, to Counsel such as are Perplexed, to Relieve such as are Circumvented, to Prevent the Ruin of the Improvident, to save the Innocent, to support the Impotent, to Take the Prey out of the mouth of the Oppressor, to Protect the Orphan, the Widow and the Stranger.*

'Tis sad, when any *Noble Faculty* (as yours is) designed for the Good of Mankind, is made to serve the *Practitioners* private Advantage, more then the Benefit of *Society*.

There are *two* things generally complained of.

*One*, that some care not, what business they undertake, be it never so suspicious, so it bring in grist; whereas it becomes your office, to perswade *peace*, much rather, then to help on an unjust *war*: it being the design of *Law*, not to foment but to compose *quarrels*, and to discourage and detect all *frauds*, and not to give them any of her assistance.

*Another* complaint is of vexatious dilatory methods; insomuch that the *Law*, which was intended for *dispatch*, proves it self many times a tedious *grievance*, and the *remedy* becomes the worse *disease* of the two: that a *prudent Man* (I do not say, a *meek Christian*), would choose rather to loose his right, then to recover it this way, and (as it is ordinarily said of desperate *debts*) to throw good money after bad.

To you, the *Plaintiffs* and *Parties* concerned; that you would *study to be quiet*, and not trouble *Law* with every trifle.

I know the *Apostle* 1 Cor. 6. speaks of *Heathen* Judicatures, that he would not have *Christians* repair to for Justice.

I know the *Law* in it self and its own purposes is good, and was appointed to determine *controversies*, and to put an end to *differences*: But 'tis such *differences*, as cannot be otherwise ended.

To bring every small matter before the *Judge*, that might have been taken up at home, is to abuse *Law* and *Gospel* both, as being a great disturbance to *Government*, and as great a breach of *Christian Charity*.

The *Apostles* reproof, I am afraid, may be applied to too too many, in the seventh verse of that *Chapter*; *There is utterly a fault among you, because you go to Law with one another. Why do you not rather take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded? Nay, you do wrong, and defraud, and that your Brethren.* There are some, it seems, who, as we use to say, *will neither do right, nor take wrong.*

In the last place, to you, *Witnesses*, that you set the God of *Truth* before you, and assure your selves, that your *souls* will go along with your *depositions*.

He that attests a falsehood knowingly, wounds God in his dearest *Attribute*; and where he does not know, he ought not to say.

Especially, you *Jurors*, remember you are *sworn* men. It must be a *Verdict*, a true saying upon your Oaths, you are to give in.

It is a shame to consider, how cheap *Oaths* are grown amongst us; how the reputation of *English Faith* and honesty is lost in this point.

An Oath, the Author to the Hebrews says, is the end of all controversy. Justice cannot be effected, nor Government secured without it. Heb. 6. 15.

There are two sorts of men peccant upon this account. Let me beg the favour of your patience, to speak a word with both of them.

1. Those that *refuse* to take Oaths at all.
2. Those that will take them hand over head, and not care how nor what they swear.

1. There is a sort of men that will not take Oaths. I have a charity for them, but I wish it be not upon this ground, because they have formerly broken their Oaths, or because they are resolved aforehand not to keep them, that they will not take them now. Let me tell them, this stubborn refusal, if so, is in it self *interpretative perjury*; for they are born-subjects, whether they swear or no.

But we will suppose it is out of Conscience of an Oath, as 'tis an Oath. They object that Christ and his Apostle James have expressly forbidden it; Swear not at all, say they.

Right: but examine the Context; it stands thus: *It hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy self. But I say unto you, swear not at all.* Mar. 5. 33, 34.

First then from the Opposition, I ask them; whether Christ in this place has cancelled that Prohibition of forswearing ones self, or no: for so the opposition stands; *It has been said, Thou shalt not forswear thy self. But I say, swear not at all.*

If they say he has; there will follow this absurdity; that Christ, though he bids us not swear at all, yet he allows us to forswear our selves.

But this prohibition without doubt stands good still; for 'tis brought in with the same form of words as the sixth and seventh Commandments are, *Ye have heard, that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not commit Adultery:* and I hope, they will not say, Christ has repeal'd those Commandments.

If the prohibition then stand good; it follows that if a man must not forswear himself, he may lawfully swear: for else how can he possibly forswear himself? And it were a foolish idle impertinent precept, which forbids a sin that 'tis impossible for a man to commit; to forbid perjury, and not to allow an Oath.

2. From the particular Instances; saith he, *Swear not at all, neither by Heaven, nor by the Earth, nor by Jerusalem, nor by thy Head.* It is evident, our Saviour meant only frivolous Oaths, by any of the Creatures, or by any other thing then God: and so Saint James enlarges it; for leaving out Jerusalem, and ones head, he adds, *nor any other Oath*; James 5. 12. that is, as it must be understood, any other such Oath.

And this is further confirm'd by the reason given to each instance, which refers not to the act of swearing, as it should have done, had Christ intended, as they say: but to the nature of the thing sworn by.

Not by Heaven, for it is God's Throne; not by the Earth, for it is his Foot-stool; not by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the great King; not by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. And so as Saint James, nor by any other thing: as if he had said, These, and the like, are all God's Creatures, and therefore swearing being a Religious act, they are not to be sworn by.



Now in that he forbids *swearing by Heaven and Earth, &c.* because *Creatures*; can we therefore infer we may not upon just cause *swear by God himself, the Creator*?

Rather it follows, that, seeing we are forbidden to *swear by these things, because Creatures*; therefore we may, and must, where there is occasion, *swear by God*: according to that Rule, which was never yet repeal'd, *Deut. 6. 13. Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt swear by his name.*

3. From our *Saviour's design*. We must observe Christ's scope and purpose in all that fifth Chapter of Saint *Matthew*. It was to clear and vindicate the *Moral Law*, from those abuses and corruptions, which the *Pharisees* false *Glosses* had put upon it. This appears by those other *two*.

They held, so a man did not *kill* his brother, it was well enough; he might be *angry* with him, he might call him *Fool*, and not be guilty of the breach of that Command; so he did not *actually lie* with a woman, he might *look on* her, and *lust after* her, without any offence. Our *Saviour* contrariwise condemns *Murther* in the *Heart*, and *Adultery* in the *Eye*.

So here the *Pharisees* Tenet was, that so a man did not *forswear* himself, did not swear *falsely*, he might swear, as he pleased, and by what he pleased; as *idly* as he would. Wherefore 'tis only such *idle*, impertinent, unnecessary *swearing* that is here forbidden, as well as swearing *false*.

4. From the *close* or latter opposition; *Swear not at all; But let your Communication be yea, yea; nay, nay*. 'Tis plain that swearing is here forbidden, only in ordinary discourse, in our *Communication*, not upon extraordinary occasion before the *Magistrate*; or in a place of *Judicature*, where an *Oath* is to be the end of strife.

5. *Lastly*, (and I will leave it them) from Saint *James* himself; *Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay*. Where will they find that *Christ* himself and his *Apostles*, or any of the New Testament *Saints* used these forms of speech, so as *they* do even to a ridiculous superstition?

What do they think of St. *Paul*, who in his *Epistles*, which are reckoned familiar discourses, where he is to vouch any weighty *Truth*, fears not to use such forms as these, *Before God I lye not; I protest by your rejoicing*, and the like?

Would he, do you think, had he been called into a Christian Court, solemnly to bear Witness to the *Truth*, have scrupled an *Oath*? would he have answered to an Interrogatory, *Yea* or *Nay*? No; that was not the meaning.

Saint *James* will tell them what *Christ* meant. *Swear not at all*, says he, *but let your Yea, be Yea, and your Nay, Nay*: that is, in your conversation be honest men, and stand to your word; In your dealings, in your promises; let your word be your word, your *yea, yea*; and your *nay, nay*; and then you need not *swear*: your word will be taken without an *Oath*.

For 'tis commonly seen, that those find least *credit*, who bind all they say with *Oaths*; and that those, who *swear* most, are least *believed*.

II. And this brings us to *Those* who make light of *Oaths*; who are very ready to *take* them, and more ready to *break* them.

But such must know, that the violation of an *Oath*, is the highest violation of *Conscience* that can be; and that God is *Witness* and *Judge* both; and that 'tis dangerous to call him to be *Witness* of a lye, who will be sure to be an *Avenger* of it; and that though *Perjury* perhaps is got into that practice,

Hebr. 6. 16.

Gal. 1. 20.  
1 Cor. 15. 31.

James 5. 12.

practice, that it has lost the *Infamy*, which does of right belong to it amongst Men, yet it will not miss of Divine *Vengeance* even in this life; that 'tis the boldest affront can be offered to God's *Omniscience*, to his *Veracity*, to his *Justice*, to his *Wisdom*, to his *Power*, to intitle him to falshood, and cover it with his holy and blessed Name; and that though they may elude a *Humane Judicature*, and escape in *this* life, yet in the *next*, when they shall appear, as we all must, before the *Judgment seat* 2 Cor. 5. 10. of God, their injured *Consciences* will stand out, and witness, and draw up large *declarations* against them to their eternal confusion and condemnation.

Now may God the righteous Judge of all the Earth, so direct you all, in what you go about, that You may have the Blessing, that the Country may have the Benefit, and that God himself may have the Glory. Amen.

A Sermon at the Obsequies of the  
Right Honourable the Lady JANE,

Eldest daughter to his GRACE

WILLIAM Duke of NEWCASTLE,

And Wife to the Honourable

CHARLES CHEYNE, Esq;

At Chelsey, Nov. 1. being All-Saints day.

The Prayer before Sermon.

**O** Almighty God, who hast knit together thine Elect in one Communion and Fellowship, in the Mystical Body of thy Son Christ our Lord; Grant us grace, so to follow thy blessed Saints in all vertuous and godly Living, that we may come to those unspeakable Joys, which thou hast prepared for them, that unfeignedly love thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord:

For Whom and for the Merit and Example of his Obedience, and for all the Instances of that stupendous Work of our Redemption wrought by him; We together with that innumerable multitude of All thy Saints, out of all Nations and Kingdoms and People and Tongues, that stand before the Throne and before the Lamb, cloathed with white Robes and Palms in their hands, do with prostrate souls worship and praise thee, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb. Amen.

Rev. 7. 10.

Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might be unto our God for ever and ever.

All thy Works praise thee, O Lord, and thy Saints bleß thee.

We give thanks unto thee, O Father, who hast made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light; who hast deliver'd us from the power of darkneß, and hast translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of thy love, by whom (having made peace through the blood of his Croß) it pleased thee to reconcile all things unto thy self. Who, when he had overcome the sharpneß of death, opened the Kingdom of heaven to all Believers.

We therefore pray thee help thy Servants, whom thou hast thus redeem'd with his precious blood: Make us to be numbred with thy Saints in glory everlasting.

We



*We praise thee also for those thy Saints, whose souls are in thy hand, whom thou provedst and foundst worthy for thyself, of whom the World was not worthy, whose end was with honour, and who are now in peace.*

*We thank thee for the good report of their Faith, and for the good examples of their holy Lives.*

*For the glorious Company of the Apostles we praise thee.*

*For the goodly Fellowship of the Prophets we praise thee.*

*For the noble Army of Martyrs we praise thee.*

*For all Holy and Vertuous Men and Women, that have departed this life in thy faith and fear, we praise thee :*

*Beseeching thee to give us Grace, to walk by the same Rule, and to be followers of Them, as they were of Christ, that we may lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking upon Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith; that we may at last be presented spotless and unblamable, when we shall come to the general Assembly and Church of the first-born, which are inrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of righteous persons made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant.*

*That our Meekness, Peaceableness, Patience, Charity, Poverty of Spirit and Purity of heart may qualifie us for thy blessing, and fit us for the Kingdom of Heaven; that mourning in this Vale of tears we may at last be comforted, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness, we may be satisfied with thy likeness, when we shall awake out of the sleep of death.*

*That we may, by virtue of Christ's Death, mortifie our earthly members, dying daily unto sin; and by the power of his Resurrection, being quickned by his Spirit, we may rise again to newness of Life.*

*That we may seriously and speedily apply our hearts unto Wisdom, and not dally any longer with our everlasting Concerns; but take to our selves such thoughts and resolutions, as we shall have when we come to dye; when having wearied our selves in the ways of destruction, we shall repent and groan for anguish of Spirit, and say within our selves, What hath our Lust and our Pride profited us? or what good have riches and vanities with our vaunting brought us? seeing that all those things then together with our time will be passed away like a Shadow, and as a Post that hasteth by.*

*Finally, that we may so spend this time of our Mortality in thy fear, that we may be numbred among the Children of God, and our Lot may be at last among the Saints.*

*As we Praise thee for the Glories and Examples of the Church Triumphant in Heaven; so we Pray unto thee for the whole State of the Church Militant here on Earth; that thou wouldst fill up the number of thine Elect, and hasten thy Kingdom, and prepare us all for its coming.*

*Particularly, be Gracious to that part of thy Church planted amongst us in these Nations of great Britain and Ireland, &c.*

*Lastly*

*Lastly, we intreat a Blessing upon Our selves here assembled; that thou wouldst sanctifie that sad Occasion which has brought us together at this time; that as it hath pleas'd thee of thy great Mercy (for which we give thee hearty thanks) to deliver this Honourable and Virtuous Lady here before us, out of the miseries of this sinful World; whose Soul, we are assured, is now in peace, where no torment shall touch it; whose Hope was full of Immortality, and who having been a little and gently chastised by thee, we doubt not, is now greatly rewarded: So thou wouldst assist both Speaker and Hearers; that I may speak of her becomingly and Usefully, for the Instruction and Comfort of all that hear me, that her Memory may be imbalmd to Posterity, that Her Name may be as precious Oyntment and as a Box of Spikenard poured forth in the midst of the Congregation; and that the sweet Odour of her Vertues and the Recital of Her Praises may Incourage us all, in Imitation of Her Example, to Live well, that we may Die well; that, after this sinful Life ended, we may all be made partakers, together with Her and All thy Saints, of a joyful Resurrection.*

*Grant this dear Father, for thy Beloved Son, our Blessed Saviour's sake, in whose most absolute Form we sum up all our Requests. Our Father, &c.*

*A Sermon at the Obsequies of the Right Honourable the Lady Jane Cheyne.*

Prov. XXXI. xxx.

*Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain: but a Woman that feareth the Lord, She shall be Praised.*



HO King *Lemuel* and his Mother, mentioned in the first Verse of this Chapter, were, I shall not undertake to decide. 'Tis agreed on by most Interpreters, that by *Lemuel* is intended *Solomon*, who, as *Grotius* observes, was *Octanominis*, had eight several Names given him in Scripture, and by his Mother consequently is meant *Bathsheba*; (though the same *Grotius* intimate too, it might be *Hezekiah* himself, who order'd the Collection of these Proverbs, and his Mother *Abijah* the Daughter of *Zechariah*;) and that *Lemuel* was *blanda matris Appellatio*, a made word of Kindness to sweeten her motherly Instructions. Prov. 25.1.  
2 Chron. 29.1.

In the Chapter, that we may come orderly to the Text, there are two main Parts to be observed.

I. *The Queen Mothers Lesson* to the young Prince her Son, in the Nine first Verses.

II. *The Character of a good Woman*, from the tenth Verse to the end. Which, if it be but the continuation of the Mother's Lecture, is then a Direction to him how to choose a Wife: but if we take it for a Composure of *Solomon's*, then 'twill be a dutiful Return of the Son to his Mother's Instruction, in a large Commendation of her Wisdom and Care; wherein he sets her forth as the Pattern of her Sex, and pleats *Laudum Corollam*, a Garland and Imperial Wreath of Praises for his Mother's Royal Head.

Be this Good Woman then, in the History, *Bathsheba*, or *Abijah*, or (as the *Papish Expositors* turn it) the *Blessed Virgin*; be she, in the Allegory, the Church, or any pious Soul; it cannot be deny'd, but that even Literally it belongs, and may properly be apply'd to any Good Vertuous Woman whatsoever of the whole Sex; who is here Commended through all the Letters of the Hebrew Christ-cross-row: This being *Carmen Alphabeticum in Laudes Bonæ Fæminæ*, an Alphabetical Poem in the Praise of a Good Woman.

And



And though the whole of the Description be *Praise*, yet we may take a distinct notice of two *Particulars* contained in this *Poem*.

I. Her *Properties* or *Vertues*, reckon'd up all along to the 28th. *Verse*.

II. Her *Praise* more Emphatically exprest in the very Close, the four last *Verses*.

- I. Her *Vertues*, to give you a brief *Summary* of them, are
  - Her *Conjugal Fidelity*; verse 11.
  - Her *Kindness* and *Constancy of Affection*; verse 12.
  - Her *Housewifery* and *Diligence*; vers. 13, 19.
  - Her *Thrift* and *Menage*; vers. 15, 16.
  - Her *Industry* and *Assiduity*; vers. 17, 18.
  - Her *Charity* and *Liberality to the Poor*; verse 20.
  - Her *Providence* and *Forecast*; verse 21.
  - Her *Magnificence* in her *Furniture* and *Apparel*; verse 22.
  - Her *Reputation* in *Publick*; vers. 23, 25.
  - Her *Traffick* and *Trade abroad*; in *Selling*, verse 24. in *Buying*, verse 16. and in both, verse 14.
  - Her *Discretion* and *Obligingness* in her *Discourse*; verse 26.
  - Her *Care of Home*, and good *Government of her Family*; verse 27.

II. Her *Praise* to these many *Vertues* is threefold.

1. *At Home*, by her *Husband* and *Children*; who do not speak out of Flattery, but as having been constant Witnesses of her *Vertuous Carriage*, verse 28. commend her in this form of words, verse 29. *Many Daughters have done Vertuously, but thou excellest them all.*
2. *Pro Rostris*, solemnly out of the *Pulpit*, in the words of the *Text*: for so *She shall be praised* implies a solemn *Commemoration* of her *Vertues*, and an *Encomiastick Harangue* upon her *Person*.
3. For an everlasting *Memorial* of her, throughout the *whole Country*, where she lived: common *Fame* shall do her that right; in the last verse, *Her own Works shall praise her in the Gates*: to wit, among the *Elders of the Land*, as 'tis verse 23. among the *Nobles* and *Rulers of the Kingdom*; *Persons of the highest Place* and *greatest Quality*.

Our present business is that Part of her *Praise*, which is to be perform'd in this place: whereto, as I have always accounted it no mean Advantage of my life to have been known to a Person of so eminent a *Worth* and *Goodness*; so I find my self somewhat enabled by that personal Knowledge for a fair discharge of the *Duty* of this *Hour*, without being much beholden either to publick Report, or private Information. though the Whole almost, of what I have to say, will be *That* too, which *All* that hear me, will readily back with their Testimony.

To come to the business then; the *Vertuous Woman's Commendation* here is exprest,

I. Negatively, or, if you will, Comparatively; *Favour is deceitful, and Beauty is vain.*

II. Positively ; *But a Woman that feareth the Lord ; She shall be praised.*

As if he had said, *Favour* and *Beauty* are idle, insignificant, sorry, mean, toyish Things, that deserve not serious Commendation ; at least are not fit to come into Competition with *Vertue* and *Discretion* and *Piety*, which are the truly Laudable Qualities, and make the only durable lasting Foundation, to erect a Monument of *Praise* upon.

'Tis indeed the Humour and Custom of wanton loose Wits, to Court the *Beautiful*, to Commend the *Fair* and the Gay ones in their *Sonnets*, and to make *Elogies* upon them, while they are Living, and *Elegies* when Dead : but alas ! Those are poor Subjects in comparison of the *Good* and *Vertuous* ; and when those Poets Laurels and their Mistresses Praises too shall be blasted by *Truth*, and withered by *Time* ; the Woman that *fears the Lord*, the Pious Lady, the Vertuous *Matron* shall be praised on still, and her Memory ever continue fresh and green.

I. We shall, to clear our way for the proving *Vertue* the alone Praiseworthy thing, shew the *Deceit* and *Vanity* of those other two Candidates for Praise, *Favour* and *Beauty*.

*Favour*, in the Original, *Grace*, that is, the gracefulness of Habit, Gesture, Gate, Discourse, and the Attractives of a handsom Carriage, so as to gain Beholders Love ; *ai ápiouais* say the Septuagint, *the Complaisances* of Conversation, which do readily procure peoples Favour and good Opinion.

Again, *Beauty* in the Symmetry and Proportion of Parts, in the Feature and Complexion ; That which strikes the Eye and affects the Heart.

And yet both these *deceitful* and *vain* ; for these Reasons.

1. *As they are Frail and Subject to Decay*, whether in their own Nature, (or, which is all one, as to the Praise and Esteem of them) in the *Opinions* of Men.

The Fairest Face is as brittle as the *Glass* it views it self in, and is at best thus but a *Miroir* of Beauty, and when broken with Age, or marr'd by Disease, becomes a *Looking-glass* of Mortality.

The distinction betwixt *Beauty* and *Deformity* is quite lost in the Grave, and many times before they come there.

Besides, These are things that owe their Estimate to the *Opinion* of men, and not to any Intrinsic Value ; which is therefore as mutable and uncertain as Opinion, which 'tis built upon. And this cries up one thing to day, another to morrow.

*Tamar*, after *Amnon's* wicked satisfaction, was as Unpleasing in his eyes, as she was Fair before, Nay, the Text says, that *the Hatred, wherewith he hated her, was greater then the Love wherewith he had loved her.* And it appears so by his usage of her ; for a *Friend* was employed to bring her in, but a *Servant* serv'd to turn her out, and bolt the door after her. 1 Sam. 13. 15

2. *As things that may be Counterfeited and put on.* These are many times but ascitious Ornaments ; when *Art* is taught to supply the defects and to repair the decays of *Nature*.

Nor is *Beauty* alone thus false, when some through a Fantastick Pride or some worse Distemper, walk as if they were their own *Sepulchres*, *Whited or Painted* : but *Favour* or *Grace* it self may be abus'd to meet Marth. 23. 27. retricious ends ; whilst in a demure Aspect, and a graceful Behaviour, it may be difficult to distinguish betwixt a *Courtesan*, and a *Ma-*

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tron,

tron, betwixt the *strange woman* and the *woman that fears the Lord*.

3. As they prove too frequently *Occasions of Evil*, and *Incentives to Lust*.

This is indeed *Fallax Gratia*, a *deceitful Favour*, which leads into Temptation; and a *vain Beauty*, which infnares and betrays the Soul.

Gal. 6. 4.

Thus some of the *Fathers* tell us, the *Angels* themselves (so they interpret the *Sons of God*) were surpriz'd with the Beauty of the *daughters of men*; from whom came the Impious race of *Giants*.

Some *holy persons* have upon this consideration been remarkably Severe to themselves, mischieving their *Bodies* to secure their *Souls*, and preferring a Voluntary Deformity before an Involuntary Temptingness.

*Matthew of Westminster* tells us, that in the year of *Christ* 870. when the *Danes* were got into this *Island*, *St. Ebbe* with all her Nuns of *Coltingham*, did all by one consent cut off their noses and upper lips, to discourage wicked Attempts, and to preserve their Chastity: which disappointment so inrag'd the *Danes*, that, turning their Lust into Cruelty, they burnt them all alive together with their Abbey.

Matth. 5. 29.

And *Vincentius Bellovacensis* tells us of another *English Nun*, who being for her lovely Eyes covered by one of the King *Richards*, and by him demanded of the *Convent*, got both her Eyes pluck'd out, and sent them to him, as a Present, in a Dish; with this Complement: that *her Eyes were at the King's service, but her Heart was to be only Christ's*. This was very close to the Letter; *If thine Eye offend thee, pull it out*.

O dangerous *Beauty*, which dost so hazard *Vertue*, when 'tis in thy company! O unfortunate *Vertue*, that art thus fain to wound and mangle thy self, that thou maist be kept Intire!

However, notwithstanding this *deceitfulness* and *vanity*, Those Advantages of good *Carriage* and a Courteous Behaviour, of *Beauty*, and a graceful Aspect, are not absolutely to be condemn'd, or to be at all disparaged by us, where God gives them; they being Blessings, as they come from his Hand.

And *Vertue* and *Piety* it self doth by this means oftentimes meet with a fair Respect, and kindly Welcome in the World; a good Face and an ingenuous Address being a kind of potent Recommendation even to Strangers, who will be ready to think the Face a good *Index* of the Mind; and a fair compos'd Body a suitable lodging for a Beauteous Soul.

So I know not how, *Vertue* having *Favour* and *Beauty* for its Attendants and Maids of Honour, appears more Serene, and yet no less Majestick; and does more plausibly insinuate its Awe and Veneration into peoples minds.

Nor is our *Vertuous Woman* here wanting in these Imbellishments, which may be requisite either to her Sex or State; but is like the *Merchants Ships*, to which she is compar'd in the fourteenth *verse*, even in this Sense, that she is not without Tackle her and Ornaments.

We find in the 22<sup>d</sup> *verse*, that *her Cloathing is Silk and Purple*: she goes in good Habit, in a rich and fashionable Garb; and *verse* 26. that *she openeth her Mouth with Wisdom*; and in her Tongue is the Law of Kindness; she charms all she Converses with, and wins them with her Discourse.

Bur



But then she prizes these *Advantages* under these three *Conditions*.

1. *Not so as ambitiously to Seek them, or fondly to Vaunt them.* She would not borrow a Complexion from her Boxes; but what St. Nazianzen says of his Sister Gorgonia in her *Funeral Oration*, likes that Red best, which she owes to a blushing Modesty, and that *White* or *Pale*, which comes by a severe Abstinence.

2. *Not so as to be proud of them, or to Rely upon them as solid Goods.* Beauty is a thing but skin-deep, and at best is but a *Set-off*, no real Substance. Piety is her alone Confidence, and *Vertue* design'd for the Pillar of her *Praise*; whereon her fair Name shall be engrav'd in legible Characters to succeeding Generations.

3. *Not so as to Mis-employ them, but to Guide them with Vertue and Discretion.* She likes a Chearful, but would not have it a Tempting Look. She composes her self all over exactly to *Innocence*, and then makes that very Innocence all over Complaisant; and above all things takes care, that Beauty may not be her Crime, and that the Fair *Vessel*, her Soul is Imbarked in, may not want a good Pilot, a Vertuous Mind to Govern it.

And this for the *Negative* or *Comparative* Part, that *Favour* and *Beauty* are not of themselves Things commendable in Women, any further then they are accompanied and manag'd by Discretion and Vertue.

II. We come now to the *Position*, which is that a *Woman*, which feareth the Lord, she shall be prais'd. In which *Proposition* we have,

1. The Subject; a *Woman*: with her Qualification; that fears the Lord.
2. The Predicate; She shall be praised.

I. WOMAN, in the primitive design of Nature, God's Master-piece, being the last work of Creation, and made with a great deal of Deliberation and Solemnity.

For to look upon her as a Supernumerary Creature, and one brought into the world by the *By*, besides the Creator's first Intention, upon second Thoughts (though Those too amongst us Men, with whose methods it pleases God out of condescension to comply, pass for the Wisest) is to lay a foul Imputation upon *Divine Wisdom*, as if it had been at a stand, and were to seek.

Wherefore, as we use to argue, that *All things* were made for the use and service of *Man*; because He was made Last of all: I do not see, if that Argument be good, why the same *Consequence* should not be of like force here too, that *Man* himself was made for the service and affectionate Care of *Woman*, who was fram'd not only after him, but out of him too, the more to Ingage his tenderest and dearest Respects.

Certainly this manner of Production doth plainly evince the Equality of the *Woman's* Merits and Rights with *Man*; she being a noble Cyon transplanted from his Stock, and by the Mystery of Marriage Implanted into him again, and made One with him.

She is then Equally at least Partaker with him of all the *Advantages*, which appertain to *Humane Nature*, and alike Capable of those *Improvements*, which by the Efforts of Reason and the Methods of Education and the Instincts of the Blessed Spirit are to be made upon it; and no less fitted in her natural Ingeny for all kind of *Studies* and *Employments*: though Custom, like a *Salique Law*, hath excluded them from Publick Offices and Professions, and confin'd them mostly to the narrow Territories of *Home*.

Our *Vertuous Woman* here, besides her *Oeconomical Government* (wherein her Husband's cares are not concern'd) plays the *Purchaser* and the *Merchant*, vers. 16. and 24. though too, whilst her *Husband is sitting in the gates among the Elders of the Land*, ver. 23. her hands are holding the distaff at home, ver. 19.

A Learned Woman of *Utrecht*, has in a Printed Discourse fairly in this behalf vindicated the Reputation of her *Sex*.

Nor are there wanting Illustrious Examples of *Those*, who for *Atchievements in Arms* and *Attainments of Arts* have not come short of the Bravest Men; and left behind them signal proofs, that their *Minerva* can upon occasion, as well wield the *Sword*, and manage the *Pen*, as lay her hands to the *Spindle*.

One Instance out of our own *History* will be sufficient; Queen *Elizabeth* of Happy Memory, who 44 years together sway'd the Scepter of this Realm, with as much Repute as ever any of her Predecessors did, and through all her Reign shew'd at once the Spirit and Resolution of her *Father*, and the Policy and Wisdom of her *Grand-father*, without their Vices.

Hence it was, that all *Arts* and *Sciences*, all *Vertues* and *Graces*, both *Divine* and *Moral*, are represented in the shape and habit of Women. Nor is there any reason for fancying *Angels* themselves more of Our Sex than of the Other; since amongst them there's no such Distinction, but they may as well be imagin'd *Female*, as Male.

Above all, for *Piety* and *Devotion*, which is the Top-perfection of our Nature, and makes it most like *Angelical*; as the Capacity of Women is as large, so their Inclinations are generally more vigorous; the natural Bias and Tendency of their Spirits lying that way, and their softer Temper more kindly receiving the supernatural Impressions of God's Spirit.

This is *That*, if any thing, which gives their Sex the Pre-eminence above us Men, and gains them just advantages of *Praise*; that, whereas *Those*, who have only a handsom Shape and good Features to commend them, are Ador'd and Idoliz'd by persons of slight Apprehensions and ungovern'd Passions; *Pious* and *Vertuous Women* command the Veneration of the most Judicious, and are deservedly Admired by Holy Men and Angels.

Hereupon St. *Jerom*, though no Friend to a Married life, yet seem'd to pride himself in his Acquaintance with *Vertuous Women*, and has made so many Addresses to *Religious Ladies*, that those very *Epistles* and *Mis-sives* of His, which wear *Female Names*, would make a competent Volume of themselves. And our Blessed *Lord* himself has in his *History* honour'd *Them* with a frequent mention, as his ordinary Associates and constant Attendants. Thus the *Woman who feareth the Lord shall be praised*.

II. That's the Qualification ; *She that feareth the Lord* : for that is the right *Vertuous Woman*, in the 10. vers. *whose price is far above Rubies*.

But there we have an *Objection*, which I must first take out of the way: Where shall we meet with such an One ? *Who can find a Vertuous Woman* ?

I can speak it with as much Truth, as I must speak it with Sorrow, we have lost *One* ; for by all the Description, if there be such an One to be found, This was *She*.

But this *Question* does not import an Impossibility, but only the Difficulty of finding her. He had in vain taken all this pains to describe her so at large, if there be no such Person to be found.

There are sure such Women; more perhaps then Men, as Men are now, deserve there should be ; and as they are extraordinary Blessings, so they that fear God shall meet with them.

'Tis shrewdly *Observ'd* by one, that the reason of their Paucity proceeds from us Men. Men being generally so Evil, as they are, make Women generally not so good as they would be. For at that time of the World, when Men priz'd *Vertue*, and made that the Standard of their Affection and the Sole Object of their Choice; when Discretion and Goodness were lookt on as the Taking things, and Piety alone was accounted a sufficient Portion ; then in that *Golden Age*, the great Emulation of that Sex was, who should weigh most in real Deserts, and come best Dowried with those desirable Qualities; when *Wives* were to be bid for, and purchased at considerable Rates.

But now since the Scales have been turn'd, and Love has been brought into the Market, that *Vertue* and good Education are undervalued, and *Wealth* is become the Lovely Thing, and all the Shafts of mens Desires are Tipt with Gold and Silver ; or else by *Some* that lay their Judgments aside, and let their Fancy choose for them, *Beauty* is made the Mark, and so there be a fair inviting Outside, no regard to the Inward disposition of the Mind ; 'twas Consequent, that *Women* also should grow more negligent of *Vertue*, and apply themselves more particularly to those Things, for which they were to be priz'd and esteem'd by Men.

And yet there are still, notwithstanding this Degeneracy of Manners, such Women to be found of the *Primitive* Stamp ; who, though they may, in common Civility to Vulgar Errour, comply in sinless *Fashions* and *Modes*, and in the Innocent *Ceremonies* of life (taken up by Others peradventure, to ill Ends, in these corrupt Ages) yet do make it their main Employ to enrich and beautifie their Minds, and bestow most of their Time in the Culture and Adornments of their Souls.

To find them out, let us Examine the *Character* by which the Hue and Cry is made.

She, whom we call the *Vertuous Woman*, goes amongst the Interpreters under several names.

אִשָּׁת חַיִּל [ *Esheth Hbail* ] say some, a *Stout Valiant Woman* ; so the French, *une Vaillante Femme* : a *Virago*, one fit to lead an Army ; so that, as it follows in the next verse, *her Husband shall have no need of Spoil*. Fear being so natural to this Sex, it looks like Miracle to meet with such an One ; and yet we read there have been whole Nations of Them : Witness the *Amazonian* Courage, and the Valour of the *Spartan* Ladies.

Others



Others, *strenuam & sedulam*, a busie Industrious Woman, one of a stirring active Spirit.

A Woman of *Wealth and Riches*, says *Aben Ezra*, which is not One of a great Portion; for Then there was no such Custom; but one that by Industry and good Managery gets *Wealth*: so in the *verse* before the *Text* she is commended in the *Margin* of our Bibles, *Many Daughters have gotten Riches, but Thou surpassest them all.*

A right good Vertuous Woman; so the *Chaldee*: one that in her Carriage and Actions shews, she has the Fear of God in Her.

A Discreet Wise Woman, say Others; or as an ancient *Armenian* Copy has it, one of a Sound Brain, and a good Understanding: and this falls in with the *Fear of God* here, which, the Wise Son and the Pious Father both tell us, is the *Beginning*, or, as the Hebrew word imports, the *Sum Total of Wisdom*: and they have a good Understanding, that Do thereafter.

Psal. 111. 10.  
Prov. 9. 10.  
רָאשִׁית

This fear of God doth not only Contract, but Dilate the Heart too, laying Restraints indeed upon the Conscience from Sin, but withal Inlarging the powers of the Soul to all kind of Duty: for 'tis an Ingenuous Filial Fear, that has a very quick sense and tender Apprehension of God's Displeasure, and makes her wary of offending him, either in Doing any thing that should not be done, or Omitting ought that should.

'Tis not a Fear then, that ariseth from the Weakness and Imbecillity of Female Constitution, which renders them more apt to Devotion; but is very well consistent with that *Valour and Courage*, which the *Septuagint*, and other *Interpreters* make the great Ingredient of the Character; Imboldning us and putting us on to Do or Suffer any thing for God's sake.

And we may consider it Two Ways.

1. In the Root and Principle.
2. In the Branches and Productions.

1. In the Principle, 'tis a Reverential Fear, which composes the Inner man to becoming Thoughts and awful Apprehensions of God, and obliges the Heart close to him with Silken Cords, and binds up all the Affections, that they may not run loose after Vanities, but fixes them upon Heavenly things, and suits all the Passions of Humane Nature in a fit and constant Correspondence to the Attributes of the Divine; so as to Love him for his Goodness, Admire him for his Wisdom, Dread him in his Power, stand in Awe of his Justice, take Delight in the remembrance of his Mercies, and at last to be swallowed up into Him in the Contemplation of his Infiniteness, in all These.

2. In its Operations, that is, in all the Actions of Life; for, like the Warp, it runs through the whole Web of all Her Duties; it Tutors the Senses, and puts all the Members in Array, and orders the Outward man into an answerable Decorum to the Inward; that her Look, her Speech, her very Gesture and Carriage, prove innocent Expressions of honest Meanings and a Vertuous Mind; and all the Phenomena and outward Appearances of Her in her Conversation are but the natural Representments of her Bright Spotless Ingenuous Soul, the fair Inmate of a rightly Disciplin'd and well Order'd Body.

The *Fear of God* then comprehends in it all *Religious Worship*, both *Internal* and *External*: nor doth it consist in an hypocritical Demureness, and a distantial Pride, or supercilious Contempt of others, but in a sincere *Humility* to God, and *Charity* to Men; when, which is the *Virtuous Woman's Practice*, what with *Church* and *Closet* on the one side, to which she alway pays a regular Attendance; and her *Family* on the other, which she is always, what with Instruction, what with Example, looking after; She is continually Employ'd, and divides her Time betwixt the Offices of a *Chearful Devotion* and the Duties of an *Indearing Converse*.

Now certainly if there be such a Reward as *Praise* appointed for the *Pious*, if *Honour* hath its Temple adjoyn'd to that of *Virtue*; then this *Pious Vertuous Woman* here mention'd, must be reckon'd the truly *Honourable Woman*, and will deserve to have her *Herself* strow'd with *Roses* and *Violets*, and her *Memory* crown'd with *Flowry Chaplets* and *Myrtle Wreaths* of fragrant and lasting *Praises*.

That's the *Next* thing we have to do; *She shall be praised*.

III. It is a *Morose Humour* in some, even *Ministers*, that they will not give a due *Commendation* to the *Deceased*: whereby they not only offer a seeming *Unkindness* to the *Dead*, but do a real *Injury* to the *Living*, by discouraging *Vertue*, and depriving us of the great *Instruments* of *Piety*, *good Examples*; which usually are far more effectual *Methods* of *Instruction*, then any *Precepts*; *These* commonly urging only the *Necessity* of those *Duties*, which the *Other* shew the *Possibility* and *Manner* of *Performing*.

But then 'tis a most *Unchristian* and *Uncharitable Mistake* in those, that think it unlawful to *Commemorate* the *Dead*, and to *Celebrate* their *Memories*: whereas there is no one thing does so much uphold and keep up the *Honour* and *Interest* of *Religion* amongst the *Multitude*, as the due *Observance* of those *Anniversaries* which the *Church* has, upon this *Account*, scatter'd throughout the whole course of the *Year*, would do: and indeed to our *Neglect* of this in a great *Part* the present *Decay* of *Religion* may rationally be *Imputed*.

Thus in this *Age* of our's what *Pliny* saith of His, *Postquam desimus facere laudanda, Laudari quoque ineptum putamus*. Since *People* have left off doing things that are *Praise-worthy*, they look upon *Praise* it self as a *filly thing*.

And possibly the *Generality* of *Hearers* themselves are not free from this *Fault*; who peradventure may *Fancy* their *Own Life* *Upbraided*, when they hear *Anothers* *Commended*.

But that the *servants of God*, which depart this life in his *Faith* and *Fear*, may and must be *praised*; I shall endeavour to make good upon these three *Grounds*.

1. *In common Justice to the Deceased themselves*. Ordinary *Civility* teaches us to speak well of the *Dead*. *Nec quicquam Sanctius habet Reverentia Superstitum, quam ut Amissos Venerabiliter Recordetur*, says *Ausonius*, and makes this the ground of the *Parentalia*, which had been ever since *Numa's* time.

*Praise*, however it may become the *Living*, is a just *Debt* to the *deserts* of the *Dead*, who are now got clear out of the reach of *Envy*; which, if it have any thing of the *Generous* in it, will scorn, *Vulture-like*, to prey upon *Carcasses*.

Besides,

Besides, Christianity lays a greater Obligation upon us; The *Communion of Saints* is a *Tenet* of our Faith. Now as we ought not to *Pray* To them or For them, so we may and must *Praise* them.

This is the least we can do in Return for those great Offices, they did the Church *Militant*, while they were with Us, and now do, they are with God: nor have we any other probable way of *Communicating* with them.

Aristot.

The *Philosopher* in his *Morals* makes it a Question, Whether the Dead are any way Concern'd in what befalls Them or their Posterity after their Decease; and whether those Honours and Reproaches, which Survivors cast upon them, reach them or no? and He concludes it after a long debate in the *Affirmative*: not so, he says, as to alter their *State*, but *συμβάλλειν τι*, to contribute somewhat to it.

*Tully*, though not absolutely perswaded of an Immortal Soul, as speaking doubtfully and variously of it, yet is constant to this, that He takes a good Name and a Reputation, we leave behind us, to be a kind of *Immortality*.

But there is more in it then so: Our Remembrance of the *Saints* may be a Means to Improve their Bliss, and Heighten their Rewards to all Eternity. *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, hath his Bosom thus daily Inlarg'd for New Comers.

Whether the Heirs of the Kingdom are, at their first Admission, Installed into a full Possession of all their Glory, and kept to that Stint; I think may be a Doubt. For if the *Faculty* be perfected by the *Object*, about which 'tis Conversant; then the Faculties of those Blessed Ones being continually Employ'd upon an Infinite Object, must needs be Infinitely Perficible, and Capable still of being more and more Inlarg'd, and consequently of receiving still new and further Additions of Glory.

Nor only so (This is in Heaven:) but even the Influence of that *Example*, they leave behind them on Earth, drawing still more and more Souls after them to God, will also add to those Improvements to the End of the World, and bring in a Revenue of *Accessory Joys*.

And would it not be Unjust in us then to deny them those Glorious Advantages which our *Commemoration* and *Imitation* may and ought to give them?

2. *In a due Acknowledgment of God's Gifts and Graces.* The *Praise* of his Servants redounds to his *Glory*; as Water rises to the same height it had in its Well-spring.

Matth. 9. 16.

The *Father of Lights* gives order, that our *Light*, which he communicates to us, *may so shine, that men may see our good Works and Glorifie Him*: nor has he only annexed to our Temporal Services an Eternal weight of Glory hereafter; but even here in this World is content we should go Shares with him, and be made Partakers of that Glory, we bring in to his Infinite Stock.

The *Servant* was justly condemn'd, that put his Master's *Talent* in a Napkin, and buried it under ground: nor would our Ingratitude be less Inexcusable, should we in silence bury those *Gifts* he has bestowed upon any his Eminent *Servants*, that have by his *Grace* well Employ'd them, and wrap up the Memories of his *Saints* in the same Shroud with their Bodies.

3. Lastly,



3. Lastly, *For the benefit of the Living*; and that two ways: for their *Instruction*, and for their *Comfort*.

*For the Instruction of all that are to come After*, 'tis fit the lives of those that have gone Before should be Remembred. 'Tis not enough to have a Map of the Country, we are Travelling to; unless we have experienc'd Guides, whose Conduct and Directions we may safely follow.

Our way to Heaven does not lye so ready and plain, that we cannot Miss it; and here 'tis dangerous to trust to our own Judgment, and (which was one kind of ancient *Superstition*) to resolve our selves as our *Staff* falls: but our surest Course will be, to observe the Track of others Foot-steps, and walk in their Faith, and go on in the beaten Road of *Holy Examples*; for fear of being either led aside into the untrodden By-paths of *Schism* and *Separation*, or carried along in the broad Highway of *Prophaneness* with the mistaking Multitude.

As in a Voyage by Sea the skilful *Pilot*, though he consult his Card, and steer by his Compaſs, yet he neglects not the Discoveries, other *Navigators* have made, that have sail'd those Seas, and given notice of Rocks and Shelves, and describ'd the Coastings and *Rhumbs* of the whole Course.

*Example* gives life to a *Rule*, makes it *Intelligible* and *Practicable*. God's bare Commanding us to do any thing is a sufficient Obligation to Obedience; but when by Others he shews us *How* 'tis to be done, this as it renders it more Easie to Obey, so it puts our Disobedience past all Excuse.

*For the Comfort of Survivers that stay behind, the Vertues and Praises of their Deceased Friends are to be Recounted*; that they may not Mourn and hang down the Head with Despondence, as having no *Hope*. 1 Thess. 4.13.

It was the Custom of some *Barbarous Nations*, upon the very consideration of the Troubles of this Life, from which Death sets us Free, to attend their Dead with solemn Shouts and Expressions of Joy: but *We*, who have better Assurances, when any of our Relations are delivered from the Sins and Miseries of a Wicked and Wretched World, have much greater reason to Rejoyce in their behalf; if by the Testimony of a good Life they have confirmed those blessed Expectations, upon which the Hinge of all Religion turns.

For in that we Grieve, 'tis for our Own sakes, not for Theirs. 'Tis Our loss, we Lament. They are infinitely Advantaged by the Change.

Why then should we repine at their Advancement, wish them back to their Hurt, and be discontented for the want of their Company, who, as St. Paul says in another case, *are therefore Departed for a season*, *that we may Receive them for ever*; if We by following their good Example be found worthy to be Admitted to Them? *Philem. 15.*

If it be a Kindness to Them, that our Hearts are touch'd with, we should rather, according to the Apostles Rule, *Rejoyce with them that Rejoyce*, and not Weep over them, since all Tears are now wiped away from their Eyes. *Rom. 12.15. Rev. 7.17.*

'Tis usual in great transports of Joy for Tears to burst out: and such should be our Tears over Those, that by Living well, Learnt and Practis'd to *Dye Well*, to flow from Joy as well as Sorrow; and our Joy that they are in Heaven should far exceed the *Grief* we show for their leaving Earth.

2 Tim. 4. 7.  
1 John 5. 4.

John 11. 16.

I have read of Parents, that, when their Sons have return'd Conquerors from the *Olympick Games*, could not master their Resentments, but have died with excessive Joy. Now, in a *Christian* sense, to have fought a good Fight, and with a Victorious Faith to overcome the World, how much more considerable a Conquest is it, and how does it deserve our most concern'd Joys? That in any Friend's case, that Dies thus, it would become us to say what St. *Thomas* did, when word was brought of *Lazarus* his death, *Come let us go, and Dye with him*. It was kindly said, and perhaps not Fondly neither. For certainly the most exquisite Felicities of Life are not Comparable to the Advantage of a Holy Death.

Let us then upon such Occasions, (as we use, when any Friend alters his Condition to the Better, to *Wish* him Joy;) Gratulate those that Dye thus in the Lord; not consider what We have Lost, but what They have Gain'd; and joyn with Them in singing *Hallelujahs*, Praising them, and Praising God for them, and Praising God with them.

*Praise* is a Cheerful Exercise; wherefore let me Entreat, that those Noble Friends and Relations, who have any Share in this day's Loss, whilst I practically Apply to the Duty of the Text in Praising this Honorable Vertuous Lady before us, would lay aside their own Concerns, and be Comforted, as they do mean heartily to Joyn with me in the Acknowledgment of her Praises.

I would not detain you long; I need not. All that has been, or may be said of the *Vertuous Woman*, belongs to her. To say all that might be said, would not be the Business of an Hour, but of Days and Weeks. The bare Relation of her Life would make the best *Panegyrick*. I shall gather it up as close as I can, that it may be both Brief and Useful: and That according to our former Method, where we treated of the *Fear of God*, which is here given as Her Character.

Gal. 5. 22.

First as to the *Principle*; the Candour of Her Disposition, the Sweetness of her Nature, and the Evenness of her Temper, whereof throughout her whole Life she gave Innumerable Demonstrations. And certainly *Good Nature* (however some Illnatur'd People, who would pass for the most strictly Religious, may declaim against It and all *Morality*) is the best Seed-plot for Piety and all Vertue to thrive in; the Kindliest Soil for the *Fruits of the Spirit*, *Meekness*, *Joy*, *Patience*, *Gentleness*, *Long-suffering*, *Loving kindness*, &c. which were abundantly seen in all the Instances of her Conversation.

Now because much of This may seem to be Extracted from the Parents, and by Lineal Descent to be derived from the Family; (For *Fortes creantur Fortibus*, & *Boni Bonis*; Vertues and good Qualities likely run in a Blood :) I must so far mention Her *Pedigree*, as to give the True Blazonry of her Vertues.

She was *Eldest Daughter* to his Grace the *Duke of Newcastle*, a Person of no less *Excellence* in His Merit and in His Nature, then he is in his Title; One that has been the most *Illustrious Example*, in all the three Nations, of an Acting and Suffering Loyalty. To Him, besides His other vast Deserts, the World ow'd this *Excellent Lady*; who being powerfully inclin'd by Instinct, and Duty, and Choice, to be like Her Noble Father, did so Naturally Resemble Him, and so Affectionately Imitate Him, that She represented the lively Characters of his Soul as well as Feature.

Nor must I omit her *Pious Mother*, a Lady of most Exemplary Charities, from whom She received the first Elements of her Vertuous Education; and Her *Noble Grand-mother*, the Lady *Ogle*, whose Darling she was; who, to this Lady *JANE* did in her life and at her death give particular Testimonies of an extraordinary Affection, which were often gratefully remembred and repeated by Her.

From these Advantages of *Birth*, that Natural Principle of *Goodness* flow'd, which being Inlarg'd by the Moral accessions of Noble Breeding, and Impregnated with Holy Exercises, and the Influences of God's good Spirit, stream'd into all the Faculties of her Soul; by which she became the Absolute Governess of Her own Mind.

She had that Command of Her *Passions*, that it might be questioned, whether she had Any. *Anger* and She were so utter Strangers, that the very Expressions of Dislike from Her were Obliging.

*Greatness* and *Goodness* of Mind kept her Soul always in an equal Poise, so that she could never fancy an Injury or an ill meaning from any one, or be upon any Provocation Exceptionous.

She knew her self so Innocent and *Good*, that she deserv'd no Ill, and therefore suspected none; and withal She was of so Generous and *Great* a Spirit, that unkindnesses, if intended, could not reach Her. So that as on the one hand no body (she *believ'd*) would wrong Her, if they could; so on the other, (she *resolv'd*) they should not, if they would.

Her soft yielding Compliance back'd with Magnanimity was like polish'd *Murble*, smooth and strong.

She was seated above the clouded *Atmosphere* of Worldly Joys and Troubles, even while she was Here; and had wrought Her self to a perfect *Indifference* and *Unconcernedness* in all things, but Her Service of God, and Kindness to her Friends.

She had no Value for the World, nor Over-value for Her self, who was one of the Best Parts of it. For as Her *Worth* had set Her even with the Greatest; so Her *Humility* plac'd Her familiarly with the Meanest: and yet this attended with so natural a *Becomingness*, That her very Humility exalted her, and her Condescensions made her the more Venerable and Highly Esteemed.

Where the *Passions* are kept in this Awe and Order; the *Superiour Faculties*, being clear and undisturb'd, must needs exercise all their *Functions* aright.

She took, when Young, special delight in her *Father's* Excellent Compositions. And she hath left in Writing a considerable Stock of Excellent ones of Her own; ever spending the time that best pleased Her with her *Pen*.



Above all, *Reading* of good Discourses and making of *Pious Meditations* were Her chief and daily Imployment : to which and to Her *Devotions* she was so Constant, that, as she hath fill'd some Volumes with the One ; so for the Other, from her Youth to her late Death-bed, she fail'd not of *Prayer* (as I am Informed) thrice a day ; and if Morning or Noon hapned to be omitted, She would make amends at Night, and then to be sure even that Account.

Herein lay her solid Satisfaction, in Conversing thus with God ; that She lookt upon all Occasions, that Interrupted That, as Impertinent and Uneasie : and if She had any Quarrel to *this Place*, 'twas this, the Multitude of Formal Visits, which she could not avoid receiving from *London* and returning, that took off her time from these Spiritual Exercises.

This as to her *Principle*.

Then as to the *Emanations* of it to the Eye and Observation of the World ; for we have as yet been but in the *Closet*.

In her *Maiden-state* ; Of her Infant-years, which were spent at *Welbeck*, (a place that bears the Proportion and Resemblance of a *Court*) under the Tuition of her Father and Mother, we have already spoken. We shall now treat of her more *Adult Vertues*.

What *Courage* and *Loyalty*, as the right Daughter of a *General*, as the *Valiant Woman* here spoken of, did she shew, in keeping the Garrison'd House of her Father, where she was left with *One* of her *Noble Sisters*, as a Sharer in her Vertues and the Misfortunes of Ill times (the *Other* being before that Time Happily bestow'd) amongst the Horrid Circumstances of War, till taken by the Enemy, and there made their Prisoners ?

What Gallantry of *Charity* at the Retaking it by the King's Forces ; when She became Petitioner to save her *Jaylor's* life, whose Treatments, though not Barbarous, yet had been much short of such Civilities, as to Persons of their Age, Tendernefs, and Quality were due ?

What *Patience* and *Magnanimity* in all the Difasters of Her *Loyal Family* ; Her Mother's Death, the Loss of my *Lord's* Army, his leaving *England*, His and her Brothers Banishment after and Proscription, and the Seizure of all their Fortunes, besides Her own Personal Sufferings and Unsettlements ?

What *Duty* and *Piety*, when after the *Fifths* were procur'd, She was inabled to become Solicitor for her Father and Brothers ; when Loyalty was so Criminal, that nothing less would serve them to Except them from Life : when with all Her early Diligences and Attendances, and Petitionings, how humbly and closely soever prosecuted, She could not prevail for Her Father ; Her Brothers only with much difficulty had pardon for Life ?

And then when things were grown to that Extremity, that All that could be had from an Enemy was too scant a Support for Her Banisht Father, (I have it from an Excellent Hand, that with great Obligingness gives this Account in Print) She converted Her own *Peculium* of Jewels and Plate (which her Father and Grand-Mother had given Her) into Monies, and sent it over a Token of Affectionate Duty.

Nor stopt Her *Duty* here, but She continued it together with her *Obedience* to her *Married state* : having resolv'd without his Leave and Consent not to change her Condition ; nor so neither, without a Liberty from her Intended Husband, out of that Fortune, Her Father's Nobleness had design'd Her, to make him a considerable Present ; (so I find it

*Nobly*

Nobly Acknowledg'd by the same Excellent *Authoreſs*) of which *His Grace* (I understand) ſoon after his *Reſtauration*, no leſs obligingly, with greateſt Kindneſs of all generous and indearing Expreſſions, Order'd a liberal Return.

And then with what *Condeſcending Prudence* and *Judicious Moderation* did She make her Choice; when having through the Iniquity of the Times obſerv'd the Deſolation made in the Greateſt Families, and the little Choice then amongſt thoſe Few left of the Higher Nobility; (for She reſolv'd to match with no Family, which had ill-treated her King and Father, how advantageous ſoever) She ſuiting her Judgment to her Inclination, accepted a *Gentleman*, yet One (beſides His other *Accompliſhments*, and the *Merit* of his moſt Affectionate *Reſpects*) of an *Ancient Family* and a very *Noble Deſcent*, with whoſe *Principles* and *Fortune* She perſwaded her ſelf of *Content*? And ſhe found That perſwaſion did not deceive Her, having here in *Chelſey* lived theſe 14 Years and ſew Months, as well to Her own, as to the great Satisfaction and Joy of every Body elſe that knew Her.

How willing She ever was to Oblige all perſons; how Ready to all good Offices; how *Meek*, and *Humble*, and *Charitable*, and Familiarly *Courteous* to Neighbours and all others, let *Fame*, let *Envy* it ſelf ſpeak.

Of her *Charity* to this *Place* I queſtion not but we ſhall ſee in a ſhort Time ſome fair Teſtimonies erected.

Her *Devotions* ſhe lov'd particularly to make out in Obſerving the *Faſts* of the Church, as much and as oft, as the tenderneſs of Her Conſtitution could well permit.

Next to *Reading* and *Writing* ſhe delighted much in her *Needle*, and hath left great quantities of Work to her Children.

This in ſhort the account of her *Life* in its Healthful time.

We come at laſt to the ſad Scene of her *Sickneſs* and *Death*, wherein it pleas'd a good God in ſome meaſure to answer her deſires, (who had always a tender Apprehenſion for *Pain*) that, though the Fits to ſorrowful By-ſtanders ſeem'd not to be without Pang and Agony, yet were graciously Alleviated to Her by a *Surprize* of her Senſes, for the time, and That ſo Gentle too, as never to cauſe any Diſorder or Indecency.

Nor after the Fits, at the return of Spirits, ſufficient to give Her liberty of Speech, did She ever (except two of her four laſt days) complain of *Pain*, which was then Violent in her Head; but even then and at all other times of her Sickneſs, while She had Speech, She uſed it moſt in *Devotion*, and in many gentle chearful and obliging Expreſſions to her *Husband*, *Children*, *Doctōrs*, and other her mournful *Aſſiſtants*.

Particularly in the Three weeks *Interval*, She had, when there were very good hopes of her *Recovery*, She uſed often to ſay; That, though ſhe reſigned up Her ſelf wholly to the wiſe diſpoſal of a good God, yet She being in expectation of being call'd away in her firſt Fits, look'd upon her *Recovery* as a gracious kind of *Diſappointment* (they were Her own Words) by God Almighty. This She did (She ſaid) not out of *Diſcontent* at her *Sickneſs*, which ſhe thankfully acknowledged tolerably *Eaſie*, but (as having conquered this World, and being now in her *Paſſage* to a *Better*) out of her Intuition of a glorious Crown, that, She truſted, awaited her in *Heaven*.

Now, now, was the Time, when all the Powers of Her Soul, all Her Vertues and Graces were Summon'd together, with united Force, to make  
up

up the *Complin* of her *Devotions*; wherein she Profess'd, to the Equal Comfort and Grief of Those that heard Her, her *Confidence* in God, her patient *Submission* to Him, her Holy *Resignation*, her *Indifference* to Life, and her *Preparedness* to Dye. Of which, amongst many others, there are two Remarkable *Instances*.

One to a *Reverend Father* of our Church, whom she told with great Unconcernedness, as he was discoursing piously to Her; *That she was not afraid to Dye; not that she had or fear'd any Trouble or Discontent here, but that she might Injoy the Blessings of that Better World.*

IIa. 38. 18.

The Other to Her sad and afflicted *Husband*, whom, as He was at her Bed-side praying to God, that he would restore Her again to Health, that she might Live and Glorifie him, when those, that went down into the Pit, could not Praise him; she stopt Him in his *Prayer*, and with a comfortable Look and strong Voice (though a great difficulty of Speech had some time before possess'd Her) said, *She would Glorifie God, whether she lived or died*: and then recommended her *Children* to His Care: Who as He did in all her sickness out of a strong *Sympathy* of Love, suitable to His constant *Tenderness* and Her great Merit, entertain all her Ills with quicker and deeper *Resentments* (if we may consider Those as Two, who were so nearly One) then if they had been His Own; that those *Epileptick* and *Convulsive* Fits, which seiz'd Her Brain, did at the same time seize His Heart: so after Her Dissolution and the Departure of His Better Soul, He finds no Reason to live, no Joy in life, but This, to look after those living Remains of his Dear and Pious *Deceased*, and to be Paying on that Love, which was Due to Her, in the Indulgent Care of Her Children.

These dear *Children* of Hers, as She had often in her Health, so she did now more frequently in her Sickness instruct; charging them to apply themselves much to *Reading*, especially to be diligent in constant *Prayers* to God, to be Observant to their *Dear Father*, and transferring that *Obedience* they had to Her self upon Him, to pay Him now a *double Duty*, and to be intirely *Loving* to One another; *Then and not else they might assure themselves of all good things from God and their Father.* Further injoyning them to be *Respectful* to those, that had the charge of them, and ever to give ear to their just and vertuous *Advices*; and carefully to decline the Company of vain and impertinent Persons.

As it was Her only Trouble in all her *Sickness*, that her Indisposition made Her incapable of giving that Attendance to the *Offices of Religion*, *Praying*, *Meditating*, *Reading*, as she used to do: So in the *Close*, it was the great Affliction of All about Her, and that, which of any thing She her self shew'd most Sense of, that her Speech Fail'd her; upon the Loss of which she had no other means of Expressing those pious *Ejaculations*, She in her last Sickness Incessantly poured forth, but by Sighs, and Eyes, and Hands lifted up to Heaven: whither She is gone *Blest Soul*, to increase the number of *Saints*, whom the Church this day Commemorates, and to enter into the *Joy* of her Saviour, having left *Grief* behind Her.

Whom in the Whole, as to all *Relations*, as Her *Noble Father* (in whose Affections if Any had a greater share then Other, it was She) in a *Letter* of His since her Sickness, Stiles Her the *Best of Daughters*; so Her *Husband* praises Her for the *best of Wives*; Her *Children* rise up and call the *Best of Mothers*; Her *Servants* (for whose Encouragement and Reward she took care to the Last) own as the *best of Mistresses*; Her *Allies* lookt upon as the *Best of Friends*; Those that had the Honour to know Her, the *Best of Acquaintances*; and Those that liv'd near Her, the *best of Neighbours*.

May



May We All, that knew *Her*, keep her *Vertues* alive in our Memory, and in our Imitation.

May her *Worthy* and *Afflicted Husband*, as he does, praise *Her*, and with a chearful gratitude mitigate his *Sorrow*, and comfort himself with the expectation of a *Happy Meeting*, when *Her own Works shall Praise her in the Gates* of Heaven.

May her *Children*, those *Three Noble Plants*, She hath left behind *Her*, as the dear *Pledges* of her *Memory*, *rise up* and grow up in her *Example*, and *call her Blessed*.

And may the *Echo* of her *Praises* tend to the setting forth of the *Praise* of God, the *Father of Spirits*, and the *Father of Lights*, from James 1.17: whom cometh every good and perfect Gift.

To whom, the *Immortal* and *Ever-blessed*, *Three Persons* and *One God*, We, together with the whole *Company* of *All his Saints*, ascribe, as is most due, all *Honour*, *Praise*, and *Glory*, Now and for Ever. *Amen.*

*A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of  
M<sup>rs</sup> Mary Alston, Wife to Joseph  
Alston Esquire, at Chelsey,  
Febr. 7. 1670.*

ACTS XIII. xxxix.

*And by him all that believe are justified from all things,  
from which ye could not be justified by the Law of  
Moses.*



THE Subject, I have, by appointment, undertaken to treat of, may peradventure, to some, at first proposal, not seem altogether so proper and suitable to our present Occasion. Yet when ye well consider the purport of the words, I have now read to you, that *Faith* is the great instrument and advantage of a Christians life; for *the Just shall live by his faith: and that Justification* or forgiveness of sins is the main comfort, any Christian can have at his death; inasmuch as *he that Believes, shall not die for ever, and though he die, yet shall he live*; and over and above, that the Gospel-state affords us Christians that help towards these ends, which the Jewish Oeconomy could not do to them: ye must acknowledge with me, there cannot be a more effectual *Exhortation* for us that survive, then that of *Faith*; nor a fuller *Consolation* over our deceased Friends, then that of being *Justified*; whereby, at our departure hence, we have a prospect of ensuing Bliss in the other world, by being assured through faith in Christ, of pardon and acceptance, and of escaping the wrath to come.

This *Justifying faith*, I say, is the ground of all a Christians present duties here in this life, and of his future expectations hereafter in the next.

This it was made the Apostle say, *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain*: a Motto which every Christian may bear upon his Scutcheon, and inscribe upon the shield of his faith. For *by Christ all that believe are Justified from all things, &c.*

S. Paul being in a Synagogue of the Jews at *Antioch* in *Pisidia* on the Sabbath day, after the reading of the *Lessons*, out of the *Law* one, and the other out of the *Prophets*, as their custom was; being desired by the Rulers of the Synagogue, the chief of the Assembly, to speak,  
if

Hab. 2. 4.  
Rom. 1. 17.

Joh. 11. 25, 26.

Phil. 1. 21.

at he had any thing to say for the instruction of the people, takes occasion, after he had given them a brief *historical* account of the *Israelitish* Commonwealth down to *David*, to preach unto them *Jesus*, and to assert his *Messiaship*.

By his lineal Descent from that King *David*, according to promise, *verse 23*.

By the Testimony of *John* his fore-runner, *verse 25*.

By the Completion of Prophecies in his *Passion*, *Crucifixion*, *Death*, and *Burial*, *verse 27*. &c.

And lastly, and most especially, by his miraculous *Resurrection*, whereof there were many witnesses still alive, *vers. 30, 31*. And that accordingly as *David* himself had foretold in his Book of *Psalms*, particularly in the *sixteenth*, where he says, *Thou shalt not suffer thy holy One to see corruption*; which words in the *36. verse*, he says, as *St. Peter* had observed before in his first Sermon, *Acts 2*. could not be meant of *David's* own person: who having served his generation, died as other men do, and never rose out of that Sepulchre he was laid in; his body having long since mouldered into dust, and his monument remaining still among them till that day. Psal. 16. 10.

And now from all these *Arguments* he draws this *Conclusion* in this and the verse immediately foregoing; *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins. And by him all that believe are justified*, &c. and then last of all he pursues and drives home this *Doctrine* with a vehement *Application*, in the *two next verses*, forewarning them to take heed of rejecting the Gospel, as we find they did on the next Sabbath-day, *verse 46*. when upon the untoward and unworthy carriage of the *Jews*, the Apostle disclaims them, and turns to the *Gentiles*.

Thus have I given you a short *Analysis* and Survey of the Apostles whole discourse; the sense and main design whereof lies in the *Text*; that *Jesus Christ* was the expected *Messias*, the Saviour of the world, by whom, and by him alone, *Justification* through *Faith* in him, and *Forgiveness of sins*, which is the proper notion and importance of *Salvation*; is to be obtained.

This *Doctrine* of *Justification* by *Faith* in *Christ* is set down here.

1. Affirmatively, *in Thesis*; *By him all that believe are justified from all things*.

2. Negatively; *per Antithesin*, in opposition to *Mosaical* observances; *from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses*.

In the Affirmative part we have

1. A great *Privilege*, or the *Benefit* it self, wherein God's favour and Man's happiness doth mainly consist; and that's *Justification*.

2. The *Ground* of it; *Christ*. What by his *Merit*; 'tis in him, for his sake, and through his satisfaction, we are justified. What by his *Spirit*; 'tis by him, by his vertue and efficacy working in us, that we are justified.

3. The *Condition* or *Qualification*, which makes us capable of it; or, as some love rather to term it, the *Instrument* by which 'tis applied and made ours; and that's *faith*. *They that believe are justified*.

4. The *Extent* of it, and the latitude it bears. And that two-fold.



1. As to its *Subject*, in quo; viz. the persons justified; all that believe, or *ἅς ὁ πιστεύων*, every one that believes is justified.

2. As to its *Object*, circa quod; to wit, the things from which Justification is to free and release Believers. And that is *ἀπὸ πάντων*, from all things, from all charge and incumbrance, from all damages and inconveniences, which otherwise might upon strict rules of Justice befall them.

In the *Negative* part is expressed the weakness and insufficiency of the *Mosaical Dispensation* for the attaining this Righteousness, which is to be had only by *Christ*; that we could not be justified from those things by the *Law of Moses*.

You see then, that I have a large field of discourse before me, were I, which cannot well be expected from me in these straits of time, at large to speak of *Justification*, of *Christ's Satisfaction*, of *Faith in Christ*, and of the *legal Administration*, which are so many common places of *Divinity*, and would each of them require a Volume to be treated of in their full importance.

It will be enough, that I briefly touch at each particular head severally, and so as may be most agreeable to the purpose of our present meeting, to the *Instruction* and *Comfort* of the *Hearers*.

And I shall take this *Method*;

1. First to shew, what is meant by *Justification*, or by being justified.

2. Next to prove the insufficiency of *Moses his Law*, and its inability of justifying the observers of it.

3. And then in the last place to make out how we are justified by *Christ*, and that through *Faith* in him.

For so the words stand in the *Greek*, in this order I have here set them in; *From all things from which ye could not be justified by, or in the Law of Moses; by, or in him, namely, in Christ, every one that believeth is justified.*

I. First then what *Justification* is. To be justified is to be accounted and lookt upon as righteous and perfectly just in the sight of God, our *Law-giver* and our *Judge*; and thereupon to be absolutely discharged and acquitted, according to the tenour of the *Law*, by the Sentence of the *Judge*, from all the penalties that were to be inflicted upon the transgressors of the *Law*, and for that our Righteousness to be accepted of God in our persons and performances, and in the end to be eternally rewarded.

And this all grounded upon the nature and sanction of a *Law*, which as it proposes *Commands* and *Rules* to be observed, so is ratified with *Promises* on one hand of reward to the obedient, and on the other hand with *Threats* of punishment to those that shall be found guilty of the breach of it.

Now this *Justification*, had the *Covenant of Nature* stood, the *Law of Works* continued in force; must have been made out by our own personal exact obedience to every tittle of our obligations: for this was the tenour of that *Law*. *Do this and live*, and *Cursed be every one that continueth not in all the words of the Law to do them*: and this is that is called *legal Righteousness*.

Luke 10. 28.  
Deut. 27. 26.

But

But in *Christ*, under the *Covenant of Grace*, which was substituted in the room and stead of that other, the *Law of Faith* has altered the terms, thus; *He that believes, shall be saved*; and *He that believeth not, shall be condemned*. So that now Faith in *Christ* and sincerity of Obedience, (for there are *Commands* and *Threats* too as well as *Promises*, even in this *Law of Faith*) is that we call *Evangelical Righteousness*; whereby we are, through that satisfaction, *Christ* as our surety hath by his *active* and *passive* obedience wrought for us, (which through *Faith* in him is imputed unto us for Righteousness,) justified by him, to the forgiveness of our *sins*, to the acceptation of our *persons*, and to the reward of our *services*. Mark 16.16.

Again this *Justification* is indeed attained in this life, being laid hold on by *Faith*, evidenced by our *Obedience*, and sealed to every particular Believers conscience by the *Spirit of Promise*: but in the next life will be declared in open Court, at the general Assizes of all Mankind at the last day; so that the true Believer lives and dies in peace of conscience, as having an assurance through *Faith*, that *Christ* by his death has satisfied for his sins, and purchased for him everlasting life.

For so we find *Justification* explained in this very *Chapter*, by comparing the 38. and 26. verses with our Text. What he had said there, *to you is the word of this salvation sent*, repeating it here in other words, *Through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins*. So that to be justified is to have our sins forgiven, and our souls saved.

II. Having thus stated and distinguished *Justification*, we are now to remove the *legal* Righteousness, that we may establish the Righteousness by *Faith*, and to shew that the *Law of Moses* was unable and insufficient for the justifying of any one. Where first we are to premise an usual *Distinction* of that *Law* into *Moral*, *Ceremonial*, and *Judicial*.

The *Judicial Law* was peculiar to the *Jewish Commonwealth*, designed only for *external polity*, and for the quiet and regular administration of the Civil State of that people; nor has it any obligation upon any other people any further, then, as it was a body of *Statutes* appointed by God himself for the government of his own people, it deserves our *veneration*, and as far as the circumstances and customs of other Countries will admit, an *imitation*.

The *Ceremonial Law* was most properly the *Law of Moses*, wherein were delivered the rules of God's Worship, which consisted of *Purifications* and *Expiations*, and other *Levitical Rites*. That again obliged none but *Jews* and their *Proselytes*, and was to have an end at the coming of *Christ*.

The *Moral Law* was not so much the *Law of Moses*, as the *Law of Adam*, that which is written in every man's heart, and was obligatory to all mankind before *Moses*, and will be so to the end of the world; such as are all the *Precepts* of the *Decalogue*.

For though there be somewhat in them *Ceremonial*, to which none but *Jews* were obliged; as in the fourth the strictness of the *Sabbath-rest*, and the very Day it self (for had it not been so, it could not have been altered; whatsoever is in its nature purely *moral*, being of a *perpetual* as well as *universal*, and of an indispensable obligation) I say, notwithstanding somewhat of Ceremony intermixt, the things themselves commanded or forbidden in those precepts are acknowledged and owned by the very light of Nature; as that God should have a proportion

on of our time bestowed on his service, which in equity could not be less than a seventh part.

Marth. 5. 17.

Beyond all this, our *Saviour* himself tells us, he came not to *destroy* this Law, but to *fulfill* it in his own person, and heighten its obligations upon us his followers.

And it appears by circumstances here, that the Apostle addressing his speech to the *Jews* might very likely mean only the Law of *Ceremonies*, as possibly he does in his *Epistles* to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, and in other places, by *works* of the Law intend mainly the *Circumcision* and other *Rites* and observances, which some *Converts* of that Religion, at the first propagation of the Gospel, mainly insisted on, and mixed with their Christianity: a persuasion and practice, which some *Converts* of that Religion, at the first propagation of the Gospel, mainly insisted on, and mixed with their Christianity: a persuasion and practice, which the *Doctor* of the *Gentiles* does every where upon all occasions, as he meets with it, endeavour to confute.

John 1. 17.

Yet this Law also having been given by *Moses* in some sense, as to the promulgation of it, and the accommodating it to the use and interest of his Country-men; I shall take it in too, and make good, that neither the observance of the *Ceremonial* Law, which obliged the *Jews*, could; nor the performance of the *Moral* Law, to which all men are obliged, can or ever could justify any man. And this according to that place, *The Law was given by Moses; but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ*: where as *Truth* is opposed to *Ceremony*, so *Grace* is to the *Law of Nature*.

Heb. 10. 1.

1. First the *Ceremonial* Law, besides that it laboured under other disadvantages, as that it was *burdensome* in its charge, and in its attendance; and it was *obscure*, compared to Gospel light, as being but *the shadow of good things to come*; it was in its very constitution *imperfect* and *impotent*, and that in two respects.

1. It was not *commensurate* to the necessities of all mankind; that *Levitical* service having been prescribed only, and appropriated to the *Jews*, as a characteristic mark of distinction betwixt them and other Nations.

2. It was not *adequate* to its end; which was the expiation of guilt, the atonement of wrath, and the propitiation for sins. For *it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins*, as the Apostle argues, *Heb. 10. 4.* Wherefore *the Law*, as he says there, *could not by those Sacrifices*, which were fain to be continually repeated, *make the comers thereunto perfect*.

Ezek. 18. 4.

For indeed what proportion was there betwixt those mean oblations and the ransom and price of souls? For the *Verdict* of the Law was, that *the soul that sins shall die*. What amends then could the death of a poor beast make for the transgression of its owner? or how could those sorry acknowledgments reconcile Divine Justice? Which made the Prophet *Micah* cry out, *VI. 7. Wherewith shall I come before the Lord? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* No, this would have been no compensation. It cost more to redeem souls than so.

Psal. 49. 8.

But



But, you'll say, if it be so, what use was there then of those *Ceremonies* and *Sacrifices*? Was no one justified under that Law, no Righteousness to be had by that Dispensation?

Yes, but 'twas the righteousness of *Faith* then too; and those that were, were justified by *Christ*, who was represented and typified in those *Legal Rites*: for it was the immaculate *Lamb* that virtuated all those *Ob-lations*, and the whole *Pedagogie* of that Law had its effect and consummation in him. Wherefore it was to be but of a *temporary* date, and as it pointed to him, so it was to end in him.

2. Nor was the *Ceremonial* Law only imperfect, but the *Moral* is so too, that which has a natural obligation upon all men. The inability of this Law, as to *Justification*, is partly from our weakness, partly from its own.

1. We are naturally unable to perform it in an *exact* obedience: and though some *Hereticks* are bold to say, that a man may by the strength of *Nature* satisfy all the demands of that Law, we are by nature obliged to; a Doctrine, which modest *Philosophers* amongst Heathens disclaim; as appears by the *body of death*, the blessed Apostle complains of, and other passages in him, taken out of the Writings of *Plato*. Rom. 7. 24.

Yet supposing, that there were no *original corruption*, and that a man could lead a *perfect life*; which are two things that are not to be supposed; for what man ever was there beside the Son of God, that was either born, or lived without sin? If he could make *satisfaction*, where would be his *merit*? Or how could he extend that satisfaction to the benefit of others?

But alas! Scripture tells us, *no man can save his own soul*; much less is he in a capacity to do it for another, but must let that alone for ever. Psal. 22. 29.  
Psal. 49. 7.

2. As we are unable to go through what the Law requires, so the Law also is unable to help us. It lays *Rules* indeed before us, and *Obligations* upon us, and convinces us sufficiently of the *Duty* we owe; but furnishes us with no *strength* for the performance of it.

*I had not known sin*, says the Apostle, *but for the Law*; no, nor praised it neither. For (which shews the *pravity* as well as *weakness* of our nature) *lust* takes advantage from the Law, and breaks out with the more violence from under its restraints. Not but that the Law is in it self *holy*, and *just*, and *perfect*; but *sin* takes occasion from the Law to be *exceeding sinful*. Rom. 7. 13.

Wherefore he affirms elsewhere, that as *the sting of death is sin*, so *the strength of sin is the Law*; from whence sin hath all its damning power; since without the Law sin could not damn us; for *where there's no law, there's no transgression*. But what follows? *But thanks be to God*, says he, *which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ*; and that's our *third* Consideration. 1 Cor. 15. 56.  
Rom. 4. 15.  
1 Cor. 15. 57.

III. That we are *justified by Christ* alone. What *Moses* could not do in his Law, *Christ* has done in his. *Grace* has supplied the defects of *Nature*; and what was wanting to *Legal* Righteousness, is made up by the *Evangelical*.

The *Ceremonies*, as they were to have their *period*, so were to have their *completion* too at the coming of *Truth*: and the *Law of Works* is not so much superseded, as 'tis accomplished in its end, by the *Law of Faith*; which exerts it self, though not in an *exact*, as was then required, yet in, that, which is now accepted, a *sincere* obedience.

Now this *Justification*, I told you, is had by *Christ* two ways.

1. By *imputation* of his *satisfaction* and *merit*.

2. By the *influence* and *efficacy* of his *Spirit*.

I am sorry to find that some men among us take offence at these terms of *imputed Righteousness*, and *infused Grace*, as *notions* that do not so well square with *Right* (*i. e.* they mean their) *reason*. But as sure as our *Sins* were *imputed* to *Christ*, so really is his *Righteousness* imputed unto us: and as sure as we have no natural ability of our selves to any thing that good is, so certain is it, that we are to be influenced by God's good *Spirit*, infusing a *principle* of grace into us, and accompanying that grace along with his assistance in its particular *acts*.

Otherwise I am to seek which way we are to expect, either to be *justified*, or to be *sanctified*: for I hope they will not say our *Justification* or *Sanctification* is from our selves, and so make men to become their own *Saviours*.

1. We are justified by *Christ*, *per modum meriti*, as a *meritorious* cause; by virtue of that *satisfaction* he has made for us.

1 John 1. 9.

Rom. 5. 19.

For the *Father* and the *Son* having in our behalf agreed upon a mutual *Covenant* and *ingagement*, that whosoever *believes*, should through *Christ* have *forgiveness* of his *sins*, and be accepted in the *well-beloved*; and *Christ* on his part having in his own person fulfilled the *Law*, and fully answered all its demands, and satisfied *Divine Justice* for us; it now remains, that God, as he is *faithful*, will *forgive us our sins*, if we be *faithful*; and that he will in *justice* justify us sinners by *Faith* in his *Son's* sufferings, and *cleanse us from all unrighteousness*. For so he that knew no sin was made *sin* for us, that we through his obedience might be made *righteous*.

To this *satisfaction* of his, which was of it self *plenary*, the *dignity* and *excellency* of the *person*, that undertook and performed for us, has added that illustrious advantage, that there has accrued a large stock of *merit*, a purchase of *life* and *glory* for all *Believers*, as well as of *pardon* and *grace* for true *Penitents*.

Nor is it his *Merit* alone, for which we are *justified*: But,

2. We are justified by him *per modum efficientiæ* too, as an *efficient* cause, by the working of his *Spirit*.

And this was to ascertain his purchase and to apply his acquits: and therefore, when he had finished the work of our *Redemption*, he came into this lower world about, he not only ascended himself into *Heaven*, there to sit at the right hand of the *Father*, and by continual *intercessions* to plead and make good his *merits*; but did also send down the *Spirit* to keep residence here below, and to perform the office of an *Advocate* and a *Comforter*, and made him the great *Trustee* to issue out the revenues of his grace.

Eph. 1. 10.

John 17. 21.

Besides, all things in him are gathered into *one*; and there is that strict *Union* and intimate *Communion* betwixt *Christ* the *Head* of the *Church*, and all the lively *Members* of that his *mystical Body*, all true *Believers*, that they and he are one, *as the Father and he are one*. For he having espoused our nature as well as our quarrel, the virtue of that  
hypo-

*hypostatical Union* extends it self over all, even to the very dust of the Faithful, that sleep in their graves.

From this close *Union* it follows, that all Believers, as being parts of himself, are animated and acted by his *Spirit* effectually in several *operations*; such as these are in the matter of *Justification*, we are now upon: that by this Spirit of his, the *Merits* of Christ are applied to us; and that our *Consciences* are sprinkled with his blood from dead works, to the purging away of guilt; that the *pardon* of our sins is assured and sealed to us; that *Faith* is wrought in our hearts, and that a sufficiency of *Grace* is given in to us, whereby we are enabled to every good work.

And all this according to the *Covenant*, by which he was to purchase not *pardon* only, but *grace* also for us, whereby we might be as discharged from the *guilt*, so released from the slavery and *dominion* of sin, if we rightly imploy our victorious *Faith*: which is the *Condition*, or, if you will, taking the word in a *moral* sense, the *Instrument* of *Justification*.

IV. And this we are now to speak of, and then conclude with the *Extent* of it, that 'tis all *Believers* are justified, and they are justified from all things. And these two will make up our applicatory part, the *condition* for our *Instruction* and *Exhortation*, and the *extent* for a word of *Comfort*.

Seeing then that *Justification* is so great an advantage and *privilege*, such a *benefit* and blessing, as none is to be compared to it; as that which sanctifies and sweetens all the enjoyments of *this* life, and ascertains Gods favour and glorious hopes to us in the *next*: that which renders all conditions comfortable, living or dying; whereas without pardon of sins and peace of conscience, let a mans outward fortunes be what they will, the man is an utter stranger to true happiness, whilst he is *here*, and will be abandoned to a sad miserable estate to all eternity *hereafter*: and seeing that this *Justification* is not to be had but by *Christ* alone, who took upon him to be our *surety*, and has done and suffered all that was necessary to be done and suffered for us in order to our salvation, and has by his *merit* and *satisfaction* purchased for us *pardon* and *grace* whereby we may be saved; and that the *merit* of his *satisfaction* can no other way be derived and conveyed to us but by *Faith* in him, a reliance on his *merit*, and an obedience to his *Gospel*; and that without our faith *Christ* and his *Gospel* and *Salvation* it self can stand us in no stead; and all the merits of his *Obedience*, and the benefits of his *Passion*, and the dispensations of his *Grace* will signifie nothing, be of none effect to us, if we remain still in our *unbelief*.

Let us be *exhorted* to have *Faith* in the *holy Jesus*, to have recourse to him as to our *Mediator* and *Advocate*, to imbrace him upon his own terms, to nail our sins to his *Cross*, to cast our burden upon him, who is able to save to the utmost all that put their trust in him, to shelter our selves in the clefts of that *Rock*, the wounds of our dear *Saviour*, and renouncing all other hopes with a holy confidence, roll our selves upon his *satisfaction*, that we may be clothed with the robes of his *Righteousness*, and be found in him to the atoning of our offended God, to the pacifying and purifying of our troubled and guilty consciences, and to the escaping of *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish*, and everlasting burnings, which attend those that through unbelief and impenitence live and die in their sins.

Hebr. 7. 25.

Cant. 2. 14.

Rom. 2. 8.

But



But because *Faith* is a word of large and doubtful meaning in holy Writ, let me also for your better *instruction*, that no one may mistake himself, lay before you some of the most ordinary *acceptations* of the word, which yet do not come home to our purpose, nor amount to a justifying *Faith*.

Sometimes *Faith* is taken for an *acknowledgment of Divine Truths revealed in God's Word*.

And this, though it be enough to denominate one *Orthodox* in his opinions, and sound in his judgment; yet if it be but *Notional*, and hath no *Practical* influence upon the heart and life, is no right sound *Faith*; by which a man shall be *justified*.

Otherwhere it denotes a *firm persuasion of mind*, that the thing, one is taking in hand, is *lawful and fit to be done*. In which sense the Apostles rule is to be understood, that *whatsoever is not of faith is sin*.  
Rom. 14. 23.

And this is very far from being a *Faith*, that will *justify* one before God or men.

For some out of an *erroneous conscience* (which sure is no good conscience) may, having a zeal not according to knowledge (as often has been done) think those things *lawful*, which are quite contrary: such as our Saviour speaks of, that will kill you, and think they do God good service in so doing.  
Rom. 10. 2.  
John 16. 2.

And others, when they have not a mind to do things that in their own nature are *lawful*, and the command of a just Authority makes *necessary* to be done, may pretend dissatisfaction of *conscience* for a colour of their *disobedience*.

Another common *acceptation* (to mention no more) of *Faith* is, as people take it for a *strong assurance of God's peculiar love and favour* to them in *pardoning their sins*, and *designing them for salvation*. When perhaps they have no other reason for their so believing, but that they are willing to *believe* so, and have taken pains with themselves to persuade themselves into such a belief, and make themselves *believe* they do *believe*.

And this may be, as it too too often proves, a dangerous mistake, by putting the name of *Faith* upon a fond over-weening conceit, and a rash unreasonable presumption.

Wherefore that thy *Faith* may not deceive thee, take along with thee these three or four *marks of tryal*, to examine it by, whether it be a right well-grounded *Faith* or no.

1. A true *Faith* imbaaces Christ in all the capacities of his mediatorial office; as King, Priest, and Prophet.

2. It takes in the whole compass of Gospel-dispensations; Commands and Threats as well as Promises; Sacraments and all other Ordinances alike.

3. It engages the whole man, the assent of the Understanding, the compliance of the Will, the regularity of the Affections, and the composure of the outward Behaviour.

4. It always is accompanied with serious Repentance for sin, and a frank expression and exercise of Charity, according to the sense a man has of the love of God towards himself.

Dost thou find then, that by thy *Faith* thou ownest and acceptest thy Saviour all over in all his three Offices? that thou art as content to submit to him, as a Prophet, to teach and instruct thee; as a King, to rule and

and govern thee; as thou art glad to have him thy *Priest*, to satisfy for thee and to bless thee?

Art thou willing to be saved his way, and to conform to his *Methods*; so as to engage in *working out* thy own salvation; and art thou convinced Phil. 2. 12. thou oughtest to do something for thy own sake, something for his, who has done so much for thine?

Has thy *Faith* an equal impartial respect to Christ's *Commands* as to his *Promises*? and dost thou take as much delight in the obedience of Faith, as thou dost in its *assurance*?

Dost thou consider, that, though it be a *Covenant of Grace* thou standest under, yet 'tis a *Covenant*, and ties thee up to *conditions*? and that though the Gospel be a *Law of Liberty*, 'tis a *Law* still? and that *Christian liberty* does not give thee a freedom from duty, but from sin, and is not to be used as a cloak of malice and licentiousness? James 1. 25. 1 Pet. 2. 16.

Hast thou an even regard to all the *means of grace*, and a desire to profit by them all; and dost not by a wanton preference of one *Ordinance* to another, forfeit the benefit of all the rest?

Canst thou tell where to find thy *Faith*, in what part of thee 'tis seated? Does it swim as an empty *Notion* in thy *head* only, or has it by serious *resolutions* sunk down into thy *heart*, and thence flows into all thy outward parts; to the government of thy *thoughts* and *desires*, thy *words* and thy *actions*?

Dost thou use to call thy *sins* to account, and thinking on them and thy Saviour's *sufferings* together, set open the sluices of *grief*, and mourn over thy wounded *conscience* and thy crucified *Jesus*?

And lastly, hast thou such a sense of God's *love* to thee, in the *pardon* of thy sins, that thou canst freely *forgive* all offences done against thee; and for his sake, who for thine has not spared his Son, cheerfully part with all thou hast, and *resign* up all thy concerns into his hands for his uses, when he calls for them? and is thy *Faith* a *Faith working by charity*, that Gal. 5. 6. puts forth *vital acts*; and evidences and justifies it self by *good works* to be a living and a true *Faith*? For though it be *Faith alone* that *justifies*, yet 'tis no true *Faith* that is *alone*; and as a man is not justified for his good works, so no man must hope to be justified *without* them.

If thy *Faith* be such a *Faith*, as will abide this *trial*, and answer this description; then 'tis a *Faith* thou mayst trust to, and thou hast reason to *believe* thy self to be a *Believer*; and God will improve and build up thy *Faith* to blessed assurances of *pardon* and *peace*, of *Grace* and *Glo-ry*.

V: And then in the *last* place, what *Comfort* will it be to be thus assured? when thou canst apply the general Proposition to thy self, which is that

*All that believe are justified.*

*But I believe.*

*Therefore I am justified.*

If all *Believers*, then thou, *Believer*, whoever thou art: of *whatsoever condition*; be thy worldly estate never so low, thy outward circumstances never so low, thy outward circumstances never so contemptible, thou hast an equal share and interest in God's *favour*, and in the *merit* of *Christ* with the best.

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Again,

Again, *whatever* thy former life hath been, read with comfort that black list of the foulest sins, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *Idolaters, Adulterers*, and the like; *And such*, the Apostle tells them, *were some of you*, but now are ye washed, now are ye sanctified, now are ye justified.

Reflect with sorrow upon what thou *hast been*, and with joy give God thanks for what thou *art*.

And then, *how weak* soever thy Faith at present be; canst thou say, *Lord, I believe*, that he may help thy unbelief, and increase thy faith more and more, till Faith it self shall be swallowed up into Vision?

This as to the *Extent* of the subject; nor has that of the *object* less of *Consolation* in it, when a Believer considers, that by his Faith he is justified and fully discharged from all things, from all suits and evictions, from all troubles and molestations, from all dues and demands; his *surety* having paid all for him.

2 Cor. 5. 21. From the *guilt* of sin, in that he that knew no sin, was reckoned amongst transgressors, and was made sin for him.

Luke 22. 37. From the *punishment* of sin, *Christ* having offered up himself in Sacrifice once for all. As for the *chastisements* and light *afflictions* of this life, as they are but *momentary*, so they are attended with an *eternal weight of glory*.

2 Cor. 4. 17. From the *demands* and *sentence* and *curse* of the Law, his Redeemer having fulfilled all *Righteousness* for him, and nailed the *band-writing of Ordinances*, which was against him, to the *Cross*, and undergone the *Curse* upon the tree.

Col. 2. 14. From the *wrath of God*, which the *Son of God*, his Mediator, has atoned.

From the *horrors* of a guilty conscience, which the *Lamb of God* has sprinkled with his *blood*, and his *Prince of Peace* has spoke peace to.

From the *terrors of death*, which the *Captain* of his *Salvation* has conquered by dying.

From the *accusations of the Devils*, whom the *King of glory* has triumphed over, at his descent into *Hell*, in their own Territories.

And from *everlasting damnation*, which his *blessed Saviour*, the *holy Jesus*, by his infinite *satisfaction*, has bought off for him.

And now what has this *happy person* to do in this world any longer, having his *debts* paid, his *sins* pardoned, his *God* reconciled, his *Conscience* quieted and assured, his *Accusers* silenced, his *Enemies* vanquished, the *Law* satisfied, and *Himself* justified, and his *Saviour* glorified, and a *Crown* of Immortality, and a *Robe* of Righteousness prepared for him? what has he to do here more, then to get him up to the top of *Pisgah*, and take a view of his heavenly *Canaan*; to stand upon the confines of *eternity*, and, in the contemplation of those *joys* and *glories*, despise and slight the *vanities* and *troubles* of this *sinful* and *miserable* world; and to breathe after his better *life*, and be preparing himself for his *change*; when he shall be called off to weigh *anchor*, and hoise *sail* for another world, where he is to make discoveries of unutterable *felicities*, and unconceivable *pleasures*?



O what a happy and blest condition is it to *live* or to *die* in the midst of such gracious *deliverances* and glorious *assurances*; with this fastning *consideration* to boot, that neither *life* nor *death*, nor *things present*, nor *things to come*, nor any creature is able to separate him from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ his Lord! Rom. 8. 38, 39.

Thus to *live*, is to live in *peace*; thus to *die*, is to die with *joy*: *peace* of conscience, and *joy* in the Holy Ghost.

What would not a dying man give, to have his eternal state thus secured to him, and to insure his soul for his long long voyage, whence there's no returning?

O let us earnestly beg of God to give us *Faith*, to be our *Guide* in this life, and our *Pilot* for the next.

Amidst these *raptures*, 'tis but time to speak a word or two of our dear deceased *Sister* here before us, who has brought us together to do her the last office of *Christian Charity*. And sure that *Charity*, as well as *Custom*, makes it necessary, that where much may be said, something must.

Nor need I be lavish in her *praises*; since to be but just to her *memory*, and to speak out but her *due commendations*, would seem to distrust the *Neighbours*, her *Acquaintance*, my *Auditors*; whose good word and high esteem as she had, when she was *living*; so she needs no *Pulpit-flattery*, to set her forth being *dead*.

Shall I tell you of her *Conjugal affection* and her *chaste Conversation* coupled with *fear*? who, besides the advantages of a *great Fortune*, brought that to her *Husband*, which was a more valuable *Portion*, a *lowly mind*; paying that constant respect to his *Person*, and that due submission to his *Pleasure*, and that sure friendship to all his *Concerns*, and demeaning her self so *humbly*, as if she had brought him nothing but her *Vertues*. 1 Pet. 3. 2.

Shall I mention her indulgent *care* and motherly *love* of her *Children*? whose *Duties* she earned by her laborious attendance on their *Infant-years*, thinking it would look too like an unkindness to be owned as a *Mother*, where she shad not been a *Nurse* too; and judging it little better then unnatural, not to entertain them at her *breasts*, whom she had carried in her *womb*.

Shall I take notice to you, what good *Order* and *Decorum* she kept in her *Family*? how she *centered* all her thoughts and business, like the standing foot of the *Compass*, at home? and how *unconcerned* she was in the *Publick*, unless it were to do any office of *neighbourly kindness*, or when the duties of the *Sabbath* called her forth?

Above all, her *humility* was remarkable; for she had that, which Saint *Peter* advises grave *Matrons* to put on, the ornament of a *meek and quiet spirit*, which is in the sight of *God*, and of good men too, of *great price*: and this she preferred before all the gawdy *Attire*, which others of her *Sex*, especially of her *Fortune*, use to adorn themselves withal. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

In a word, as she exprest the vertues of the other *Sister* in her *domestick* cares, so I doubt not but she minded the *one thing necessary* too, and with *Mary* in the Gospel, chose that *better part*, which shall not be taken from her. Luke 10. 42.

God grant us all to be like-minded; and as he has given us his *Son*, so may he give us of his *Spirit*, to work *Faith* and all *Grace* in us, that so we may be *justified* and *sanctified*, and finally, as we hope *she* now is, *glorified*.

Now to God the *Father*, *Son*, and blessed *Spirit* be all Praise, Honour, and Glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

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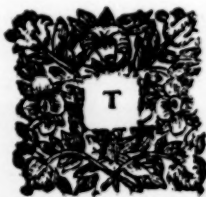
HEZE-

## HEZEKIAH's Return of Praise for his Recovery.

A Sermon Preached at Westham, <sup>in Essex</sup> 1668.

Isa. XXXVIII. 17, 18, and part of the 19 vers.

17. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.
18. For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.
19. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day.—



THESE Words are part, and indeed the principal part, of Hezekiah's Song of *Thanksgiving*, after he was recover'd of a dangerous sickness; as you find in the *ninth Verse*, when all his thoughts were, as himself tells us from the *tenth* to the *fifteenth Verse*, that he should not live, that he should never escape this bout, never come abroad more. I said, that is, by an *Hebraism*, \* I thought, *in the cutting off of my days*, (or as some Versions render it, *in the midst of my days*) I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living. I shall never go more to Church, never have any further opportunities to wait upon God in his Sanctuary. I shall behold man no more with the Inhabitants of the World; never go abroad again, to converse with men any more, &c.

\* אמר, uti  
Græcè *οὕτως*  
μαρ, dicere &  
cogitare, prout  
ē contra,  
הנה & שוה  
*meditari*, pri-  
mum, dein  
*eloqui*.

So that in effect he gave himself up for lost, as to this world; and perhaps the Physicians did so too. Nay, and which was more, when the Doctors belike had given him over, the Prophet brings him the unwelcome message, that he must prepare himself, *For dye he should, and not live*, verse 1.

Yet



Yet after all, when he was *in extremis*; upon his prayer, God was intreated to renew his lease, and to lengthen his life.

And so as in the *former* part of his Song he mournfully commemorates his *Sickness*: So in the *latter* part from the *fifteenth Verse*, to the end, he cheerfully returns thanks for his *Recovery*.

The words, we have made choice of, belong to this *latter* part; and there are four things in them observable.

1. A sad heavy Affliction; *Behold, for peace I had great bitterness.*
2. A merciful Deliverance out of this affliction; *But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption.*
3. A blessed Improvement of this mercy; *For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*
4. A thankful Acknowledgment of this improved mercy; in the rest of the words.

I. The *Affliction* is aggravated,

1. By a *Description* of it in its own nature; both in the *quality* of it; 'twas *bitterness*: and in the *quantity* of it; 'twas *great bitterness*.
  2. By *Opposition* of the contrary Blessing which is remov'd; 'twas *for peace*; a word, that comprehends in the notion of it all our worldly enjoyments, all temporal blessings whatsoever; and more particularly in Holy Writ is taken for *health*, a blessing, without which all other blessings have no relish in them, give no true satisfaction to the enjoyer. *For peace I had great bitterness*, i. e. for the health, which he had formerly enjoy'd, he had had a very bitter sickness.
  3. And then lastly the Bitterness of this change is heightned by the *Surprise* of it; *Behold*, as a strange thing! *Behold*, how all on a sudden, *upon my peace came great bitterness*, as the Margin reads it.
- Bitterness*, and *great bitterness*, and that in exchange *for peace*, for a state of health and prosperity; and all this with a sudden strange surprise. *Behold, for peace I had great bitterness*. This was his *Affliction*.

And this much further aggravated still, if we understand it, as we must, in a *spiritual* sense too; that his sickness calling his sins to remembrance, and causing some distrusts of God's love; instead of that *peace* of conscience, and quiet tranquillity of mind, he had had heretofore, his spirit was now troubled, and greatly imbibited. And a wounded grieved spirit who can bear?

Prov. 18. 14.

II. On the other hand, the mercy of the *Deliverance* wants not its heightning Circumstances too: as,

1. From the Efficient cause, 'twas God deliver'd him; *But thou hast deliver'd.*
2. From the Motive or impulsive cause, 'twas out of *Love*; not out of design, as men usually do courtesie: but out of a free kindness, and that a love of the best sort; 'twas *in love to his soul*.

And 3. From the Danger, he was deliver'd out of, and that no ordinary one; it was a *pit*, and no ordinary pit neither; 'twas *the pit of corruption*, even the Grave, the very state of death.

*But thou hast in love to my soul deliver'd it from the pit of corruption.*

So then, however he came by his sickness, he is sure 'twas God recover'd him out of it; and he did it out of *Love*, out of an especial love, he bore to the *soul* of him; which was sufficiently manifested by this, that his life was precious in God's sight, God delivering it from the pit of corruption.

III. Nor is this all. You heard 'twas a spiritual mercy, for 'twas in love to his soul; and therefore the health of body was to be attended with the welfare of his soul: and so for a full Assurance of Divine love to his soul, and for a further Improvement of this temporal bodily mercy, 'tis added, *for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back*; that, as God had imbrac'd his soul in the arms of his love; (so the Interlinear Version, *Amplexus es amore animam meam*) and as it were put her into his bosom; so he had cast all his sins behind his back, never to come more into remembrance.

This is the Crown of Mercies, when *temporals* are thus accumulated with *spirituals*; this a Recovery indeed of the whole man, when Health is improv'd into Salvation, and strength of body accompanied with pardon of sins.

This is right *saving Health*, and deserves the returns of a grateful Acknowledgment, which now follows in the last place.

IV. And that is set forth, first, by shewing the Impossibility for the dead to perform this duty, which is very elegantly express'd by three Synonymies.

*For the grave cannot praise thee.*

*Death cannot celebrate thee.*

*They that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth:*  
which all come to one meaning.

And then on the contrary, shewing not the Possibility only, but the Probability, that the living will, *i. e.* such as divine mercy continues in life, and especially such as are by that mercy preserv'd from imminent danger of death. —

*—The living, the living, he shall praise thee.*

And this probability Exemplified in himself, made good by his own practice; —

*—As I do this day.*

Thus having open'd the several scenes of our intended meditation, I shall now proceed to draw from them some useful Observations, interweaving their Applications all along; with that brevity and clearness, as such copious heads of matter may in such straights of time admit; and that rather in a cursory Explanation, than in an elaborate Discourse.

I. First, then for the Affliction, 'tis not only bitter, but in the abstract bitterness it self.

The sense of Taste is the most necessary of all our senses, it being that by which all Animals live, and take in their food and nourishment; and therefore has in it a power to judge, what is grateful and convenient to the nature of each kind, what not. Now there is no gust, the palate so much dis-relishes, as the bitter; nothing, that nature shews a greater abhorrence to, or that is less welcome to her: whereupon the Psalmist, in the person of Christ, looks upon it as one of his enemies greatest unkindnesses, that they gave him Gall and Vinegar to drink; and Christ Psal. 69. 21.  
him-

himself upon the Cross, (I suppose, out of his meer natural averfation, as he was man) when he had tasted of it, *ἐκ ἧστας πίειν, He would not drink it.*

Upon this score 'tis, that by an usual *Metaphor* every thing that is highly displeasing to any of our affections and senses, either to the rational or sensitive appetite, is termed *bitter*: every thing, I say that is any way afflictive to flesh and blood, any thing that ails us in Mind, or Body, or Estate, or Good name; whether grief, or pain, or poverty, or reproach, and the like; we may as *Hezekiah* here calls his sickness, give it the name of *bitterness*: nay, even though those afflictions come from the hand of God himself, our gracious Father, by whose providential dispensations every particular event, be it good or bad, is so carefully managed, that not a Sparrow falls to the ground without his order.

And yet this *bitterness* too, though never so unpleasant, may be made profitable, if we make a right use of it; as we may learn two things from it here.

1. Not to be *Impatient*;

2. Not to be *Insensible*,

when we are under God's hand in any affliction.

*Hezekiah's* Being in *bitterness* teacheth us one, and his complaining of it the other.

Who? Good King *Hezekiah* in *bitterness*? sick, and that unto death? this is *bitterness* indeed, that such a *Prince*, who was a National blessing; that such a *Saint*, who had *walkt before the Lord in truth, and in the sincerity of his heart done that which was good in his sight*, should be cut off in the midst of his days at XXXIX (for that was his Age at this time; the *fifteen years*, which were now added, making up his \* whole life LIV.) and should by a *bitter* and untimely death be sent away to the gates of the Grave, after the languishment of a pining distemper.

\* See 2 Chron. 29. 1.

Obs. 1.

Hence we observe, that *God's dearest ones are not exempted from bitter afflictions.*

And what are we then, that we should repine, and murmur, and think our selves hardly dealt with? Are we better then all those *Saints*, who have gone before us, who have pledg'd their Master in hearty draughts of his *Passion-Cup*, and have march'd after him in the *dolorous way* towards heaven?

This should teach us not only with *patience*, but even with cheerfulness to take up our crosses, and to deny our selves in our healths, in our fortunes, in all our enjoyments.

And to recommend this vertue the more to us, let us take along with us some considerations; *why* it pleases God to imbitter many times, as he does, the condition of his Children and Servants in this world.

1. Now God does it upon such reasons as these; *for the chastisement of sin*, from which the very best are not free; *for trial and exercise of their faith and other Graces*, which else would lie idle upon their hands: for what use of patience in time of health and prosperity? and consequently
3. *for their amendment and improvement.*

Psl. 12. 5.

The Furnace is heated over and over, that, having all their dross burnt up, their graces may be burnished and thoroughly refined, as Silver purified seven times in the fire.

And



And tell me now, *O impatient soul*, whoever thou art, what reason hast thou to take God's dealings unkindly? Tell me, canst thou say with any shew of reason, that he deals otherwise then justly and kindly by thee in all this; who orders all so to thy good, that his greatest severities are, if thou wilt but rightly understand them, the most advantageous mercies?

Further, he does it to *wear us from the world*, and to take off that hank, which the flesh has upon us; to mortifie our carnal lusts, and worldly desires; and to give us a heavenly relish. Thus when the Breast is imbittered, the Child will of himself forsake it. 4.

And lastly, to *prepare us for our great Change*: These conflicts and encounters we have with all sorts of affliction, during our whole life, are but *Essays and Specimens* of that conquest, which we must through Christ make at last of death; that, as he has overcome the world, and swallowed up Death in victory, we may be made partakers of his triumphs; and having fill'd up his sufferings, may in his name set up our banners and our trophies; the banners of our confidence, and the trophies of our victory. 5.

And now, if we have any ingenuity to acknowledge our *sins*, any zeal to imploy our *graces*, any holy ambition to better and improve our selves, and desires towards heaven, or favour of spiritual things; in a word, any thought or design of living *holy*, and dying *happy*; what reason have we with more then *patience*, even with kindness and friendship, to entertain *afflictions*, which are to help us in all this? *Psal. 20. 5.*

Afflictions, like bitter Medicines, are wholsom, though not so toothsome, and make ample reparation, in our spiritual state, for what damage they do us in our outward man.

Yet let *afflictions* be as good as they will in the consequents and effects, they are afflictions still, and may be so resented.

*Hezekiah*, no question, made very good use of his sickness, and found as great benefit by it; and yet still after his recovery he complains of it, and calls it *bitterness*.

We must be *patient*, and yet we may be *sensible* of our afflictions too.

*We are allow'd the apprehensions of Nature, even in the exercises of Obs. 2. Grace.*

A good man may be patient, and yet feel his pains, and complain of them too: or else indeed 'tis not a genuine patience. I do not think him truly valiant, whom armour or amulet has made invulnerable; but him, that feels the smart of his wounds, and yet fights on.

Thus our *Saviour*, the Captain of our Salvation, in his Agony, prays to have the Cup pass from him, says bemoaningly of himself, that his *Soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*; that, as he hung on the Cross, at the stretch of every joynt, flouted by his Adversaries, deserted by his Followers, forsaken by his Father, he cries out, *My God, my God, &c.* and being roasted (as our Paschal Lamb) with the scorching flames of Divine Wrath, due to our sins, he calls for drink to allay the raging heat of his *thirst*. *Matth. 26. 38.*

For although the Divinity could have deaded all the pains, which the humane nature underwent, and have raptur'd it into a glorious Impassibility: yet that was not to be, since the main merit of his *passive obedience* lay in this, that he had a quick sense of the wrath of God due to sin into the very heart of him; and that, notwithstanding the natural

sentiments of his humanity, which put him upon the desire of being excused, he yet with perfect submission went through all the sad stages of his bitter passion.

Yet now the world is grown to that pass, as if Religion were turn'd *Stoicism*, and stupidity were Christian Valour; that people generally take it for a kind of bravery, to be *insensible* of God's Judgments, and to walk unconcern'd in the midst of publick or personal calamities: but sure those of this temper are no other, then such as the Apostle tells us of, *Rom. 1. 31. Void of natural affection.*

Thus then *Hezekiah's* being in bitterness teacheth us to be *patient*, and his complaining of it allows us to be *sensible*.

And no marvel that he complains, for 'twas not only *bitterness*, but *great bitterness*; both extensively over all parts, all over bitterness; and intensively, all kinds, all degrees of bitterness; and so as the Original doubles the word, מר לו מר one way in *Hebrew* to express the *superlative*: so *S. Hierom* renders it, *Amaritudo mea amarissima*, my most bitter bitterness, superlatively bitter.

Now, why God does thus at any time with any of us, to make our conditions bitter and bitter again, to put in *great bitterness*, more bitter ingredients still; besides those reasons we gave before, (this enlarging the dose being designed to perfect the cure) we have two or three more to offer: as

1. First, to beat us quite off from carnal and secular confidences; that being forc'd to let go our hold of all our worldly comforts, we may stick the closer to God in our dependences upon him.

† 2 Chron. 32.  
26. 'tis call'd,  
The pride of his  
heart.

And that good *Hezekiah's* temper was a little too apt to be peccant in this, the next Chapter shews us, where out of † ostentation he shews *Merodach-Baladan's* Messengers, that came to congratulate his recovery, his treasury, and armoury, and spicery.

2. And then to put the higher value upon the following mercy.

John 16. 21.

How sweet would health be after such a bitter sickness? how soon are the pains and throws of Child-birth forgotten for joy when the Man-child is once born into the world? the greatness of the danger serving to aggrandize and heighten the deliverance.

3. And lastly to teach us a right estimate of our own graces, and of that interest we have in God.

Obs. 3.

*Great Saints must look for great afflictions.* A more then ordinary strength requires a more then ordinary trial.

Every Child, every Novice in Religion can digest a little bitterness. *Hezekiah* is to be treated as a Man, to be put upon a becoming task.

The Sons of *Anak*, and the *Zanzummim* are fit Matches for such a Champion as *Josbua* to encounter.

Wherefore if God, who uses not to lay more upon us then we are able to bear, has laid his hand heavy upon thee, has increased thy pains, and enraged thy smart: bear up, *brave soul*, be of good courage in thy conflicts, be strong in the Lord when he calls thee forth to such hard service, grudge not to lay out that strength God has given thee to bear thee up, and to bear thee out in the greatest endurance.

Thus

Thus Holy *Job*, when the whole world was against him; the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, the Devil and his Friends, and Wife and all; and God himself seem'd to be an indifferent looker on; bore himself up stoutly against them all; and by the power of God's Grace in him withstood the worst of Providences without him.

The *Saints* are made glorious by their sufferings, and 'tis their great afflictions put the lustre upon their victorious Graces, when patience has had its perfect work. James 1. 4.

*Hezekiah* was a man of great piety, and must therefore meet with great bitterness.

And this bitterness in the next place is the greater too, because it comes in the place of *Peace*; *Cujus ipsum nomen dulce est*, as the great *Orator* Cic. tells us, whose very name is luscious in the mouth, and speaks sweetness.

We say, *Variety is delightful*; and 'tis the condition of the sublunary world to be whirl'd about in perpetual vicissitudes, to be as mutable and full of changes, as the *Moon* it self, who has the Dominion over it.

And I confess, that the Day-break brings comfortable tidings after telling the Clocks of a tedious and restless Night; the verdant Spring is welcome, that has been usher'd in by a hard Winter; and the Sun-shine shews pleasant, which follows a bitter storm:

But on the contrary (which was *Hezekiah's* case here) out of a prosperous state to be tumbled into adversity, to have new troubles tread upon the heels of our *peace*, out of health to be thrown upon a bed of *bitter* sickness; this is a sad Change, and must needs go to the heart of the stoutest and wisest: when the remembrance of their former good estate serves only to aggravate their present ills.

Yet so it seems good to the all-wise God to exercise his Children, to try their sincerity to the utmost, whether they have any by-ends in their service; whether their piety be real, or only a pretense; whether, when their conditions are alter'd, their resolutions will not change too, and when a storm comes, take to the hedge, and keep a dangerous persecuted profession company no longer; whether they will go along with their Religion, when it goes, as Christ did, to be crucified, or with the Disciples desert him and leave him to himself.

This was Satan's argument, *Doth Job serve God for nought?* and *Job 1. 9.* therefore strips him to the very skin, and makes that very skin uneasy too, by cloathing it all over with blisters and sores; that by that time *Job* had done scraping with his pot-shearer, he had no skin at all left to cover him, but was † fain to get him a new covering out of the ashes he roll'd himself in.

Yet *Job*, when he had lost all, would not let go his integrity, but prov'd in despite of the Devil's suggestions, that

*The truly Pious in change of condition change not; but serve God for God's sake*, and can fairly trust him for their reward in the next world. Obs. 4.

Wherefore 'tis a brave challenge of that Heroick Apostle, *Rom. 8. 35.* *Who*, says he, *shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?* as if he had said, Let me see that Man, or Devil, or Thing in the world, that can drive me from my just confidences, and blessed assurances of God's love.

† So himself  
Complains,  
*Job 7. 5.* *My  
flesh is cloathed  
with worms,  
and clods of  
dust, my skin is  
broken, and be-  
comes loathsome.*



And for *death*, he makes nothing of it, vouchsafes it not the mention, but in a *parenthesis* in the next *verse*; looks upon it as a meer scarecrow, a thing he has been used to, and now fears it not; but gets him upon a place of Scripture, and defies it; *As it is written*, says he, *For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

And then in the two last *verses* of that *Chapter*, 'tis as bravely by him resolv'd upon the question; *I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

So then for *peace* let *bitterness* come; nay, let *great bitterness* come; yet such a resolution will weather the point of the worst *change*.

But yet to aggravate this *change*, there is another consideration still behind; that 'twas by way of *surprise*; it came strangely and unexpectedly, *Behold, for peace I had great bitterness.*

Obs. 5.

When Scripture bids us *behold*, 'tis worth our while to stand and look about; and this word gives us this lesson, that *A Christian must stand upon his guard*; prepare for change, and be provided *in omnem eventum*, for whatever may happen.

Job 3. 25.

In this posture *Job* stood, which made him bear the brunt, and receive the shock the better. *The thing which I feared*, says he, *is come upon me.*

But it should seem, *Hezekiah* did not make that preparation, entertain'd no such jealousies. We read in the *Chapter* before, that the Angel had discomfited the *Assyrian* Host, and that *Sennacherib* himself the Monarch was assassin'd by his Sons; which quit the King of *Judah* utterly of all apprehensions; he is wrapt up in security: yet see, he is no sooner rid of this fear, but another arrest is serv'd upon him; *In those days*, says the first Verse of this *Chapter*, *was Hezekiah sick unto death.*

There surprises him a Bile worse then *Rabshakeh*, sticks close to him, and sends him once more to his prayers. So apt are good men upon a little respite to forget themselves.

Judgment comes like a thief in the night, and steals upon us: it concerns us therefore to watch, and to set a good centry, that we may not be caught unawares.

But *alas!* how do we generally sleep over our great concerns, and never heed evils, till they befall us; which are with far more difficulty cured, then they might have been prevented?

Nothing can be more dreadful, then when judgments give us a *camisade*, set upon us in the dead of our security, beat up our quarters, and catch us unprovided.

And still this *affliction* has a higher step, taking it in the *spiritual* sense, for the disquiet of mind, and *trouble of Conscience*, arising possibly from the sense of sin, or from the distrust of God's favour, in this his sickness; to which the Deliverance with its Improvement hath reference.

*Hezekiah's* mind as well as body was sore; and the Bile was not so much, it should seem, in his side, as 'twas in's very heart. He had stiches and pains of Conscience; and his inner man was more afflicted, then the outward; and his spirit labour'd under no less distempers then his flesh did.

And this is sure a very afflictive condition; when not only the Cisterns of earthly comfort are filled with waters of *Marah*; but even the Spring of consolations from within, I mean a good conscience, runs in troubled streams of *Meribah*: when a godly man's thoughts work, and boyl, and, as the wicked man is compar'd by the Prophet, he becomes like the troubled Sea, which casts up mire and dirt.

*Isa. 57. 20.*

And yet thus God deals sometime with his own; to take their peace from them, to leave them as it were in a state of desertion to themselves; that so they may put a higher estimate upon his favour, and walk humbly and carefully in the sense of it.

*A troubled conscience then is not always an evil conscience.*

*Obf. 6.*

The best of Saints are sometimes put upon these conflicts, to struggle under the burden of their sins, and the apprehension of wrath due to them: when God loosens and slacks their confidences, blots and obscures their evidences, staggers their assurances, fills them full of doubts, and perplexities, and jealousies of their own estate; and so pursues them with legal terrors, that he drives them to flie before the face of the avenger, even unto their City of Refuge, the Merits of *Christ*: and likely sickness is God's time of Visiting iniquity in this manner; and then sins come thick to remembrance.

The *wicked* and the *godly* may in this respect little differ in their outward Symptoms, as to the trouble and quiet of Conscience: but in the grounds of either there is a vast difference.

The *ungodly* man, when his Conscience is awak'd with some rousing judgment, is possess'd with the frightful foresights of unavoidable vengeance: the *godly* are troubled at God's displeasure, at the withdrawals of his favour, and the hidings of his countenance.

The *one* has no Sanctuary to betake himself to; his troubles immerse him into the gulph of despair: the *other*, when he is seiz'd with the arrests of the Law, can by Faith lay hold upon the terms of Evangelical mercy, and has a powerful Advocate to plead for him, and a sufficient Bail to fetch him off, even *Christ Jesus*, the Mediator of the new Covenant.

Nor again does their *calm* and tranquillity of mind proceed from the same principle, or tend to the same practice: The *wicked* man's quiet proceeds from his carnal security; his conscience is cast into a dead sleep, and becomes insensible, by a kind of spiritual lethargy, that 'tis not so much want of trouble as want of sense; wherefore he still runs on securely in his sinful course: whereas the inward peace, which a *godly* man enjoys, arises from the assurances of pardon, and the sense of God's favour; and this puts him upon a careful walking with God, that he may not tempt him to remove his peace.

And this his confidence in God, and resolution of his own integrity, bears him up even in the midst of his dejections and disquiets; that, when he goes mourning all the day long, when he feeds himself with his tears, and in great anxiety and distress pours out his soul within him, he can say with the Psalmist, *Psal. 42. and 43. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God.*

For

For he knows that however, when God has taken and pursu'd all his advantages against him, when he has laid load upon him, he is sure at last to give him a good issue out of the temptation, and, be his affliction what it will, to procure him in the end a merciful *Deliverance*, which is our next Theme to treat of.

II. And this a twofold *Deliverance*, according to his twofold distemper, *Bodily* and *Ghostly*.

His *temporal* affliction, his sickness, is cur'd by the temporal mercy of his recovery, that God has *deliver'd his soul*, i. e. his life, *from the pit of corruption*, from the Grave: and his *spiritual* malady or trouble of conscience by that spiritual mercy, the pardon of his sins, that God had *cast all his sins behind his back*.

First, Here's the removal of his *sickness*, and the return of *health*; and then, to improve that, here's the removal of his *sins*, and the restitution of his *peace*.

*Behold, for peace I had great bitterness.*

*But thou hast in love to my soul deliver'd it from the pit of corruption.*

*For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*

Obs. 1.

*Thou.* 'Twas Thou deliver'dst me. He imputes his Recovery here wholly to God. Hence we learn, that *God is the sole Author of all our deliverances*.

His *sickness* might have come by some casualty, might proceed from natural causes in the general way of a permissive providence: but to be sure, God had a special hand in the restoration of his *health*; that was the effect, and a peculiar dispensation of his particular providence, and came with a *Mandamus* from Heaven.

I will not deny, but *means* may, and must be, and were here used; but then 'tis God's blessing, that puts virtue into those means, and gives them an effectual operation.

Practitioners of *Physick* will tell us, that a *lump of Figs* bruised and made up into a *Plaster* may be no unfit *Cataplasm* to be applied to a plague-fore, to help to ripen and break the Bile: yet here in this case 'twas God himself by his Prophet gave the *Receipt*, and in all cases virtuates and succeeds the means.

Wherefore the *Syriack* Interpreter transposes the two last *Verses* of this *Chapter*, setting the 22. *verse* before the 21. and that very appositely to the close of the *Song* in the 20. *verse*, where he says he will *Sing songs to the tuned instruments all the days of his life in the house of the Lord*. Now, as the *Syriack* brings it in, *Hezekiah had said, What is the sign, that I shall go to the house of the Lord? that I shall go abroad again, and wait upon God in his Temple? And Isaias gave this answer, says he, Let them take a lump of Figs, and spread it upon the Bile.* (Which verses in the common order they stand in, seem to be a *versum repositum*, out of their due place.) So that the *Lump of Figs* should, according to this Interpreter, be appointed here by God for a Sign as well as a *Plaster*, nor only for a *Medicinal* expedient, but also for a *Symbolical* token.

Thus it is in all our troubles and afflictions that befall us: be it what it will, or who it will, the malice of Man or the Devil, Chance or Nature, our own negligence or indiscretion, that leads us on; 'tis God that brings us off; and as we pray, that he will not *Lead us into temptation*, (which he



he does but very rarely, and that only by way of permission) so we must pray to him alone to *deliver us from all evil*.

And yet this is not intended to lessen our gratitude too to men, whose skill or care has afforded us any help in our distress, as being instruments under God for our good. And so the *Prophet* here no question was concern'd in the good *King's* acknowledgments, and the very *Recipe* of Figs is fill'd up in the Records of Scripture.

Further, besides the subordination, that Men act as *Instruments*, in what they do for us; God is the sole principal *Agent*: there is usually this difference too; that Men, what kindness or good office they may do us, they may do it for their own sake as well as ours; not out of love to our person so much, as for some by-respect and self-end.

The *Physician* proportions his attendance to his fee; and scarce any the best *friend* we have will do ought for us for God-a-mercy. Some perhaps may by the sense of former obligations; but most by the expectation of a future reward are excited and mov'd to serve us.

But all God's mercies proceed from pure love; *out of love thou hast deliver'd me*.

I say, *Divine mercy is gratuitous*; it flows as free, as the light from *Obs. 2.* the Sun, as the stream from the Spring.

For alas! if we look into our selves, and consider how vile we are by nature, how more vile by sin; what can we find in our selves, that may any way deserve the kind respects, and affectionate regards of an infinite and glorious Majesty? what, that may be lookt upon, as a fit object of Divine Love?

Have not we just reason, the very best of us, with the *Psalmist*, to hold up our hands in admiration, and bless our selves, saying, *What is* *Psal. 8. 4.* *man that thou art mindful of him*, or takest any knowledge of him? or *the son of man, that thou visitest him*, that thou makest any account of him?

He doth not want us, nor is our goodness any thing to him; neither can our welfare add ought to his infinite glories, nor our miscarriage subtract ought from them. It is our duty and our happiness to boot, to serve him; nor is he a whit obliged to us: when we have done all we ought to do, we are to him still *unprofitable Servants*. If we are good, *Luke 17. 10.* we are good to our selves; and if we are otherwise, we shall have the worst on't.

And yet to see, how all his thoughts and cares run upon us; how he has made Man the darling of Heaven, and the charge of Angels; what blessings he daily dispenses among us, and what unconceivable good things he has prepar'd for us, if we will but fit our selves for them; how *1 Cor. 2. 9.* his providence waits upon us at our up-rising, and our down-lying, and *Psal. 139. 2.* in all our ways constantly attends us, and takes that particular care of us, that he has the very hairs of our head *in numero*; will abundantly convince us of his undeserved love to us, and of that love we owe to him again. O may those passionate concerns, he has for us, move us at least to be concern'd for our selves!

The Apostle to justify his *Allegorical* exposition of that Text in the old Law, *Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox which treadeth out the corn*; *Deut. 25. 4.* out of which he argues the maintenance of Gospel-Ministers: to shew that those words could not well be taken literally, seems to ask a strange question, *Doth God*, says he, *take care of Oxen*? Why, learned Apo- *1 Cor. 9. 9.* stle, does not God take care of Oxen? I sure, and of all his other creatures

Deut. 5. 14.

tures too: witness (to go no further) the very *fourth Commandment*, where the poor *Ass* as well as the *Ox*, comes in for his share in the privilege of Sabbath-rest) His meaning is, that God's thoughts and designs are so much busied and taken up about man, that He seems to be the only object of his care; insomuch that this very Law of mercy towards the labouring Beast, was by the *Apostle's* argument primarily and ultimately intended for the temporal support and encouragement of such men, as are set aside for spiritual ministrations, to labour in the word. *Oves & boves & pecora campi*, Sheep and Oxen and all Beasts of the Field he has so absolutely put under man's feet, as if he took no further care of them, than as they may be for his use and service.

Psal. 8. 7.

If God so freely love us, how ought we to love one another, and to help one another with all kind of courtesie and assistance? but above all, in a due imitation of Divine Charity, not to let it be a carnal affection, or express it only in service to the outward man; but to improve it spiritually, that it may be a love from the *soul*, and a love to the *soul* of one another.

Obs. 3.

*In love to my soul.* This *Soul-love* is the best of loves. This is to oblige a man into the other world with an immortal benefit, to do his soul any good, to serve him any way in that.

3 John 2.

'Tis the *Christian complement*, which the great Preacher of love St. *John* uses in his Epistle to his friend *Gaius*; *Beloved, I wish above all things, that thou maist prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.* Let worldlings think what they will; our health and prosperity is, as our soul prospers and does well: All our worldly enjoyments, unless we have the art to spiritualize them, and can by grace make them serviceable to our souls, are but dry chips, and can afford no true real comfort.

The very *Breasts* of providence, from whence our peace, plenty, liberty, and all outward blessings flow, without this are but *Wind-bags*; and those that draw them most, will find they get nothing but vanity and emptiness: fill themselves with vexation and distemper; if God by his Grace do not sanctifie his Providences to the good of their souls. This is that which makes blessings to be blessings indeed.

And indeed God does design all his temporal mercies to our spiritual advantage, if we would but comply with his designs.

And thus it was here with *Hezekiah*, whose soul was repriev'd from the Grave at once, and preserv'd from Hell; for the *pit of corruption* in Scripture-style signifies both; from the *Grave* by his Recovery, and from *Hell* by his Pardon.

Obs. 4.

To take the words in either of those senses, or in both; what a mercy of God is it to us all, to every one of us, that are here this day, that we are yet on this side *Hell*, yet on this side the *Grave*? and what care are we oblig'd to in our walking, when we consider that *All our lifetime we walk upon the pit-brink*?

Psal. 39. 5.

We say, that those that are at Sea, are but so many inches removed from death; but the *Psalmist* tells us, that upon Land too, or wherever we are, at the furthest distance, there is but the breadth of a span betwixt it and us.

Now

Now what a madness were it for any one to dance and frolick about the mouth of such a dangerous *pit*, where 'tis so easie falling in, and impossible to get out again?

And yet, *O desperate folly!* most people of the world are thus mad, pursuing the seeming sweets of a momentary life to the hazard of an eternal ruin, and the irreparable loss of their immortal souls.

I have heard a story, and I suppose many of you have heard it too, of a man, that travelling late, and being in drink, rode over a narrow foot-bridge, where there was a great deep water underneath, that the least trip of the Horses foot would have posted the rider to his long home: next morning, when he came to himself, being askt which way he came, and brought to the place, the apprehension of his last nights adventure did so surprize and astonish his sober thoughts, that he fell down dead in the very place at the sight on't.

And when we look back upon the follies and vanities of our past lives; how can we but be justly startled, when almost every step we have trod, has been upon the pit's brink of destruction?

Those especially, whose desires seem to be as bottomless as this *pit* is, who cry, *Give, give*, and never think they have enough, and are immoderate in heaping up this world's goods; may look upon this *pit* as a stop in their career: when they sit down and consider, that within a score or two of years hence, very likely in less time, all their toil and gain will come to no account: Go they must one time or other, and pack up they know not how soon, and yet carry nothing along with them of all that they have.

Beauty, Strength, Riches, Honour, Profits, Pleasures, will all be lost and spoil'd, and prove at last but Tare and Refuse in this *pit of corruption*: this *פחיתות* *פחיתות*, the *Wardrobe of our old cast cloaths*, and the store-hole of our worm-eaten Lumber.

We are all journeying straight onward to the *Grave*, and sooner or later, every one in his appointed time, must arrive there: but happy, thrice happy those, who when they are laid down to rest in the *Grave*, are deliver'd from *Hell*, that other *pit of corruption*.

And this *Hezekiah* was assur'd of, that God had deliver'd his soul from this *pit*; because his sins were forgiven.

III. And this is our *third* stage, the *Assurance* of God's love to him, and the *Improvement* of this bodily mercy: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.

From whence we may make several *Observes*; as first, that *God uses* *Obs. 1.* *to accumulate mercy*; to deal with us, as he commands us to deal with one another; to give us *good measure, pressed down, and shaken together*, Luke 6. 38. *and running over into our bosom.*

Here, upon *Hezekiah's* prayer, God gives more then is ask'd; lengthens his life, secures him and his Kingdom from the *Assyrians*, recovers him from his sickness, and pardons his sins.

Thus mercies grow like clusters in the vineyards of *Engaddi*.

Cant. 1. 14.

A great encouragement for prayer, which makes us ample returns. The best Husbandry we can use, to improve our selves, by praying often.

A great comfort this too, to any good man upon the bed of sickness; that God will both recover and pardon him, both restore him to health and accept him to favour.

\*\*\*\*\* N

Thus



Thus our *Saviour* in those Miracles of Mercy, he shew'd upon the *bodies* of men, was wont to regard their *souls* too, and wrought cures both upon the outward and inward man: as he did to the *Paralytick*, saying first, *Thy sins are forgiven thee*; then, *Rise, take up thy bed, and walk*. Thus easing him first of the heavy load of his Sins, and then enabling him to bear the lighter burthen of his Couch.

Mark 2. 5, 9. *Obs. 2.* 2. *Pardon of sins is the complement and perfection of mercy.*

His Recovery without this would have done him little good, and the renewing of his Lease have serv'd only for an opportunity of running farther on the score, and so of making his condition much worse then it had been.

Psal. 32. 1. O infinitely happy that man, even in this life, whose sins are forgiven him! all his enjoyments must needs have a pleasant relish; whereas to the wicked this *Coloquintida*, the rank *Hogo*, which unpardon'd sin gives them, spoils all their comforts, and makes their condition, be it never so spangled and glorious, never so gay and jauntly to the outward shew, troublesome and vexatious within; like the Emperour's *Ermin-Cap*, richly lin'd with pricking cares, and cutting fears: of which our good King had now clear'd both his Head and Crown; for he had God's promise, that neither the *Assyrian* should assault his Kingdom, nor *Satan* his soul.

*Obs. 3.* 3. *He, whose sins are forgiven, needs not fear Hell or the Grave.*

*Hezekiah* here is assured, that God had deliver'd his soul from the pit of corruption, because he had cast all his sins behind his back.

Prov. 28. 1. *The righteous man*, say the *Proverbs*, i.e. he that is justified by faith, and has his sins pardon'd, *is as bold as a Lion*, fearless and undaunted: for indeed, what need such an one fear?

1 Pet. 5. 3. Rev. 5. 5. Let the Devil go about *like a roaring Lion*; he has the *Lion of the tribe of Judah* to defend him: and for death, now the sting is plucked out, he plays with it as a harmless Snake; and to take off even the natural apprehensions of it, makes it familiar to him by his daily meditation.

*Obs. 4.* Lastly, *God's pardons are universal and absolute*. They are *all his sins*; and all cast behind *God's back*, never more to be remembred.

God pardons totally and finally, not by halves or half-way, but wholly and out-right; he forgives and forgets.

We are too too apt to throw our sins behind our own back, and to take no notice of them: our great concern is to get them cast behind God's back.

O let us prize this pardoning Grace of God's; endeavour to obtain it by confessing and forsaking our sins; and especially in the time of sickness, or any other affliction, when God's hand lies upon us, to make our humble and earnest supplications then to the blessed Spirit, to bring home to our soul this comfort; to renew our repentance, and to re-inforce our resolutions; and having obtain'd forgiveness, never by any fresh wilful acts of sin to forfeit the comfort of such an assurance.

IV. Thus have we seen *Hezekiah* Afflicted, Recover'd, Pardon'd: we are now in the last place come to his *Thanksgiving* and *Acknowledgment*, and that, as I noted before, set down,

1. *Negatively*, that, if he had miscarried in this his sickness, then he could not possibly have perform'd this duty of praise.

2. *Positively*, that being now recover'd, and in a state of life and health, he will make it his business, as he says in the twentieth verse,

*All*

*All the days of his life to sing his songs in the house of the Lord.*

*For the Grave cannot praise thee; &c.* which words will help us to several useful observations.

In the first place that *The only Return which God expects for his mercies is Praise.* This is given here as the reason of this his deliverance; *FOR the Grave cannot praise thee; the living shall.* Obs. 1.

God the *Jehovah* being an Infinite Being, and consequently, in his Essence and Actions, Independent of any other Being, can have no *Principle* or *End* of his Actions without him. As in a Circle, the whole round being in it self compleat, the beginning and end meet but in an imaginary point, and admit not of a real distinction.

And such a Circle is God, which comprehends all things, and is it self not comprehended. Wherefore he can have no other *principle*, but himself; no other *end*, but himself, in all that he does or designs. He is the *Alpha* and *Omega*; *From him and to him are all things.* Rom. 11. 36.

He acts all *freely* from his own will, and *wisely* to his own glory: and in this manner we his creatures are to act, if we will act regularly, from him and to him.

He is, as the *Supream Cause*, which excites and impowers all subordinate agents to act; so the *Chiefest Good* too; in which all their actions should terminate.

And in this subordination all other Creatures, in their several spheres of activity, comply with the rule and method of their Creator: Man only to his shame stands out, who has most reason to be, and to act like his God, wearing his Image.

Good and pious men however do endeavour after this, which is their perfection; to live by the *power* to the *praise* of God, that is, to act by his *Grace* to his *Glory*.

Should God require any greater matter of us, as *Naaman's* servants told him, when we lie on the bed of sickness, when we are compass'd with distresses, would not we have done it? and when for our deliverance all, that he looks for at our hands, is *praise* only; he must be of an extraordinary disingenuous impiety, that should refuse to testify his thanks in so cheap a Sacrifice. 2 Kings 5. 13:

This civility we deny not to men; 'tis a *Physician's* reputation, when his Patient recovers; and we usually, besides his Salary, allow him our good word. Let not us grudge God the honour of a poor acknowledgment.

Again, *praising* and *celebrating* God, and *hoping* for his truth, (his *mercy*, say the *LXX*; his *Salvation*, the *Chaldee Paraphrast*) are here made *Synonyma's*, to mean the same thing.

If so; then A generous trust in God's mercy is the right celebration of it: *To trust in God is to praise him.* Obs. 2.

I have been *afflicted*; God has deliver'd me; I praise him for it: how? by trusting that he will still deliver me. I have been exercised with grievous sickness; God has visited me with his loving kindness: I come to return him due praise for his goodness: how? by entertaining and professing a just confidence in God, that he will never fail me, never leave me destitute. And this, as 'tis a comfortable, so 'tis a rational and a natural duty.

We ordinarily do it to Men: when we have had trials of their fidelity in matters of any moment, we stick not to trust them farther, and by so doing recommend their honest just dealing to the world. Shall we not

much more do so to God? whose mercy and faithfulness we have so often experimented, when no one could help us out but He.

He that distrusts God, scandalizes his goodness, and calls his truth in question.

Psal. 71. 6.

Verse 9.

*David* is not asham'd to make one of the first and earliest acts of God's common providence towards him, when he was an Infant, an argument of his trusting God his whole life after. *Thou art he, who tookest me out of my Mothers Bowels.* What then? *my praise shall be always of thee.* A little after upon the strength of this confidence, he prays, *Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.*

Obs. 3.

Further, in that the *Grave* cannot praise God, nor they that go down into the *pit* hope for his truth; it appears, that *Death is a silent and a hopeles state.*

The *Grave* indeed opens a wide mouth; but 'tis to swallow the Man, not to praise God with.

Eccl. 12. 4.

And how can Divine Praises be celebrated by death, which puts all the Organs and Instruments of Speech out of tune? when, as the *Preacher* phrases it, *all the daughters of musick are brought low?*

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And then for those that *go down into the pit*, they together with their lives quit their hopes, and are lodg'd now in a remediless condition. No hope to be met with at the bottom of that *pit*, because the *pit* it self is bottomless: for so the *Septuagint* have it, *is in ds,* *Those that are in hell;* they that are in *Gehenna*, says the *Arabick*; and by the *Targum* the *Pit* is interpreted † *the lake of perdition.*

Hope is a vertue peculiar to life; and when the man dies, hope fetches its last gasp, and dies with him. After death there's no recovery.

Faith and Repentance can now no longer exercise any vital acts. If thou die in thy sins, thou wilt lie and rot in thy sins, and rise again in thy sins. No embalming can preserve thy soul, or take from thee the stench of thy sins, in that pit of corruption. Death concludes thee to an unalterable condition.

Here thou mayest manage thy resolutions, and shape thy course, to please thy self; and, if thou wilt, to please thy God, if thou wilt let his grace pilot thy vessel: but when thou art once put into harbour, the ship then is laid up, and there's no mending the miscarriages of thy past voyage.

Be sure then to live godly, if thou wouldst die comfortably; and then thy grave will prove a bed of spices, and thy dust be preserv'd, as the *Phoenix*-ashes in hopes of a joyful resurrection.

Obs. 4.

To draw to a conclusion, a fourth Note may be this, that *Life it self is a blessing to be spent in the giver's praise.* From these words, *The living, the living, he shall praise thee.* The word is twice repeated, to shew we should do it with chearfulness, *with a life*; and with constancy, *through our whole life.* If we had a hundred lives, they would be all well spent in God's service.

It will be the business and imploy of our Eternity to praise him; and we must aforehand acquaint our selves with it, and so practice this lesson here, that we may be found worthy to wait upon the *Lamb*, and sing *Hallelujahs* in Heaven.

But then if we would praise God *to the life*, we must live to his praise, by doing things praise-worthy.

Further,



Further, consider what this *life* of ours is; 'tis but a breath. We must begin this task then out of hand, presently.

There's nothing of our life ours, but the present, the *Nunc instans*, this very instant of time. For all, that's *past* of our lives, was indeed ours once, but now is not; nor can we recal, what's gone, for improvement or amendment: and what is *to come*, is not ours yet, and we know not whether it will be in our power, or no; and therefore the great duty and interest of life is the right husbanding of our *present* time.

Upon this moment hangs our eternity; and this infinite advantage our short-liv'd service has, that he, that lives to God's glory here, shall hereafter be made partaker of it.

Thus have I, as well as I could, gather'd a *posse* of *Observations*, as they grew in this fragrant piece of Scripture: and if some *Rue* and *Wormwood* be found amongst the sweeter herbs, their wholesomeness will make amends for their bitterness.

*Myrrh* and *Aloes*, as they are bitter Drugs, so they are rich Perfumes; in either notion, great preservatives they are against corruption. The Psalmist tells us, *Psal.* 45. 8. that *All the Churches garments smell of them.*

'Tis not amiss, if we have pounded and mix'd somewhat of them with the *Frankincense* of this days *Thanksgiving*. Which brings us to the close of all, the *Exemplification*; as I do this day.

And that will yield us a considerable remark, to make an end with; that *Signal mercies require solemn thanksgiving.*

Obf. 5.

So *Hezekiah* is eager to go up to the house of the Lord, and closes this *Ode* of his with a resolution there to sing his songs all the days of his life. And this on purpose to draw in others by his example to partake in the duty.

Thus *David* after such a deliverance, *Psal.* 34. invites others; *O magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together*; in the sixth verse as it were pointing to himself, *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.*

Let us then shut up all with a *Form of Praise*, wherein we may all joyn, and every one of us bear a part: and I am sure, there is not any one of this whole Congregation, that will not be particularly and personally concern'd.

**W**E praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord. All the world doth worship thee, the Father Everlasting. Heaven and Earth are full of thy glory.

Thou dost whatsoever thou pleasest, both in heaven and in earth: and yet dost by thy Providence order all events, as to thy own glory, so to the good and advantage of the children of men. Thou madest all things for the use of man, and man himself for thine own service.

We blest thee for the works of Creation. O Lord, how manifold are thy works? in great wisdom and out of great goodness hast thou made them all. The heavens declare thy glory, and the earth is full of thy goodness.

We stand obliged, as we are thy creatures and the work of thy hands, to do thee homage, and to pay thee the tribute of Praise; together with all thy works, which blest thee in all places of thy dominion.

Especially man is bound to praise thee for the dignity of his creation, being made little lower than the Angels. Thou hast crown'd him  
with

with honour and majesty, and hast put all things under his feet.

We bless thee, that thou hast made us Men and Women, after thine own image, in thy likeness; and hast breath'd into us the breath of life. We will sing unto thee therefore, as long as we live; we will sing praises unto our God, while we have a Being.

That thou hast given us an immortal soul, capable of eternal felicity, and of a blessed communion with thyself: faculties of reason, to contemplate the glories of our Maker; and of speech, to express and set forth thy praises.

All our members were writ down in thy book, when as yet there was none of them: thou art our God, even from our Mothers womb: when we yet hung at the breast, thou tookest care of us: we have lived at thy charge, and been maintain'd by thy providence, ever since we were born. Oh, let us praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.

Thou hast all along sent forth thy sun, & pow'r'd down thy rain, to provide us our food in due season; and all thy steps towards us have dropt fatness. Thou hast satisfied our mouth with good things, and hast surrounded us with loving kindness and tender mercies.

Nor have thy preservations over us been less, or less constant, than thy provisions for us. Thou securest us from the casualties of the day, and from the terrors of the night.

Thou art at our uprising and our down-lying; who keepest us both sleeping and waking, and yet thy self neither slumbrest nor sleepest. Thou understandest and guardest all our way. Day by day we magnifie thee for these thy daily favours.

We bless thee for preserving us from the perils of our infancy, and from the miscarriages of our riper years.

Then, when we were not able to help our selves, thou tookest us up, settest thy Angel-guardians about us, who continually behold thy face; and didst graciously preserve us from those inconveniencies, which either the negligence of those about us, or our own infirmity, or the condition of humane nature, might have expos'd us unto.

Since, when we were grown up to discretion, and were apt enough by our own intemperances and indiscretions to do our selves mischief; 'twas thou alone hast kept us from the injuries of weather, from the rage of merciless elements, from all ill chances and sad accidents, from the power of devils, and from the malice of men, and from the calamities of ill times; and hast often deliver'd us from the dangers and ill consequents of our own folly, even when by presumptuous sins we have put our selves out of thy protection.

O the unspeakable mercies of a good God, which either we have forgot, or were never sensible of! What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou shouldst so regard us? who scarce ever mind or regard thee, and those infinite obligations thou hast from time to time laid upon us.

We thank thee for those early advantages of our Christian education; that we were born within the pale of the Church, under the sound of the Gospel, and not amidst Turks and Heathen people, which know not thy name; and were betimes by holy Baptism ingrafted into Christ's mystical body.

O inestimable benefit, and that which can never sufficiently be valued! though such is our unthankful carriage for this peculiar favour, which thou hast denied to millions of men, that deserve it better than we do;  
that

that we loath thy Word, slight thy Ordinances, and scoff at thy Ministers; and in effect, through our peevish ingratitude, shew our selves as arrant Turks and Infidels, as any of the Turks and Infidels themselves are.

Further, we bleſt thee for the love of Friends, and the care of Tutors, which put us upon good courses; for the vigour of parts, and the integrity of limbs and senses; for our health and strength; for our peace and plenty; for blessings, both publick and private, personal and national, temporal and spiritual.

Blessed be thy name for that long-sufferance, which thou haſt exercised towards us; in giving us further time and space of repentance; that thou haſt not cut us off in the strength of our years, and the height of our lusts; that we are yet on this side hell and the grave, yet in a possibility of Salvation; and are yet alive to praise thee, as we do this day, and to speak well of thy name.

We bleſt thee for all those opportunities and advantages, thou haſt so liberally afforded us, of serving thee, and of saving our own souls; that, if we miscarry either in this world or the next, 'tis not thou by thy grace or thy providence haſt been wanting to us, but we have been wanting both to thee and to our selves.

Finally, we return thee our hearty thanks, and praise thy name, for all those afflictions, thou haſt at any time laid upon us, and for thy merciful deliverances out of them.

That, when thou haſt visited our iniquities, and chasten'd us for sin, thou haſt not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities; but haſt remembered mercy in the midst of judgment, and haſt pitied us, like as a father pitieth his children; (for thou knowest our frame, thou rememberest that we are but dust.)

That thou haſt laid no more upon us at any time, then we are inabled by thee well to bear, and by thy grace haſt supported us in our sufferings; and that, when thou haſt seen fit to put any bitterneſs into our cup, thou haſt design'd it for our souls health, and to our spiritual advantage; and lastly, that together with the temptation thou haſt given a gracious and happy issue out of it.

And here we humbly intreat thee, O Father of mercies, to accept the thanksgiving of every particular person in this Congregation, for all thy favours and merciful deliverances vouchsafed to them through the course of their whole lives; and more especially be graciously pleased to accept the thanks of that thy servant, who being by thy gracious providence recover'd out of a grievous and dangerous sickness, this day in thy house presents his offering of praise.

Grant, that both he and all of us may have that his sickness and all our afflictions so sanctified, and thus his recovery and all our deliverances so improv'd to him and to us; that we may all be fully assur'd, that out of love to our souls thou haſt deliver'd them from the pit of corruption, and that thou haſt cast all our sins behind thy back.

Thus shall our meditation of thee be sweet; we will be glad in the Lord, and rejoice in thy salvation, who forgiveſt all our iniquities, and healeſt all our diseases, and redeemeſt our life from destruction.

Who hideſt not thy face from us in the day of trouble, but regardeſt the prayer of the destitute: who lookeſt down from the height of thy sanctuary, to hear the groaning of those that are confin'd, and to deliver them that are appointed unto death.

To declare the name of the Lord in his temple, and his praise in the great assembly, when the people are gather'd together to serve the Lord.

Let



*Let us give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: Let us bring our offerings, and come into his courts: Let us sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing.*

*The Lord hath chasten'd us sore, but he hath not given us over unto death. We shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. Thou art our God, and we will praise thee: thou art our God, and we will exalt thee. Let us give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*

*The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him; in those that hope in his mercy. O Lord, our hope is in thee; Let us never be confounded. Amen.*

Glory be to thee, O God.

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**F I N I S.**

# A twofold TABLE of the principal *Scriptures and Matters* treated of in this Book.

Reader,

**I** Cannot but conceive my self under an Obligation to give thee some Account of these ensuing Tables, that, since they are so design'd, they may be Useful to thee. The Index of Scriptures I have purposely enlarged, that I might not overcharge the other Table of Matters with those Scriptural words and phrases, which may receive some light up and down in several parts of the Work: which, had they been inserted in that Table, would have made it look liker a Concordance, then what it is intended for. Some of those Scriptures are so largely handled, as to afford a just Comment upon them; as for instance, Eph. 2. 1. and Phil. 2. 13. † 34, 35. Others, I confess, many of them, are so slightly touched at, that they may seem to be but barely quoted, and not at all explained. And yet of such I may affirm, that lying, as they do, in a Bed and Vein of discourse suitable to their true meaning and natural importance, they will either give thee some new Intimation, or help at least to confirm thy former Apprehension of them.

In the Table of Matters, I did not think fit so often to repeat, as I might have done, those things which were reducible to several Heads; for example, Jesus, Christ, Messias, Saviour, Redeemer, Mediatour, &c. but have scattered them here and there, as I saw most convenient; as knowing, that a tedious Repetition would serve rather for Ostentation then for Use; and leaving thee to the ingenuity and diligence of thine own Inquiry. Besides, that such a Reiteration of Matter would have made this part too bulky, and almost as Voluminous as the Book it self. Further, I have mostly endeavour'd so to order the general Heads themselves, that thou mayest therein find the Key and Method of those Sermons, whereof any of those Heads have been the respective Titles.

One thing more there is necessary for me to acquaint thee with, that, whereas the Book was printed at several Houses, there are three several Orders of Numeral Figures belonging to it.

The First, that of the Festivals and Solemn Occasions, express simply by p. for page, or by the bare Figure.

The Second, that of the Common Subjects, &c. represented by a Dagger before the Number, thus †.

The Third and last, that of the Five Sermons formerly printed, mark'd with a Direction, thus ||. This was judg'd convenient for thy better assistance, that thou mayest the more readily find out any thing thou shalt look for. Farewel.

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**Places**



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O F T H E  
**Principal Matters**  
Contained in this  
**V O L U M E.**

*The Figures, that are bare, without any Mark before them, refer to the Festivals, &c. which make the first Part of the Book. Those, marked thus †, to the Common Subjects, in the middle of the Book. Those thus ||, to the Five Sermons formerly printed, placed at the End.*

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